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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-014

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Sha'th: Palestinians Request Postponement of Talks

JN2301070495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The PLO and Israel have decided to postpone today's negotiations on prisoners.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority, said the Palestinian side requested the postponement of the talks for one or two days in order to discuss the subject in a calm atmosphere rather than immediately after the two Bet Lid explosions.

Sha'th said he was scheduled to meet today with Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal to discuss the subject of releasing Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons.

Palestinian Delegate on Israel, Economic Cooperation

TA2001150195 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Jan 95 p A2

["Exclusive" report by Yehudit Winkler]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bonn—Muhammad Ashtiyah, head of the Palestinian delegation to the multilateral economic talks, announced in Bonn yesterday that unless progress is made in the bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, it will be impossible to expand economic cooperation in the region. Ashtiyah's announcement surprised the participants in the regional discussion, which lasted two days and was attended by 50 delegations, because ongoing events in the Middle East have not impacted on these talks to date.

Addressing the plenum of the international working committee on regional cooperation, Ashtiyah said the discussions on regional cooperation are not grounded in reality because there is a major difference between signing a peace accord and implementing it. He mentioned the fact that 20,000 Israelis settled in the territories last year and complained that Jerusalem was closed to Christian Palestinians from Bethlehem during Christmas and to Muslims during the Ramadan fast.

He charged that Israel is not fulfilling the commitments it undertook in the Gaza-Jericho agreement, claiming that, among other things, the Palestinians are encountering difficulties in importing goods to the territories. For example, he claimed that Israel is imposing heavy taxes on aid from the donor countries and said that computers sent to the Palestinians from Germany were confiscated by the Israeli authorities and later sold at an auction. The head of the Palestinian delegation stressed that, under such conditions, it is impossible to discuss economic cooperation before progress is made in the bilateral talks. Ashtiyah demanded that these issues be addressed by the multinational working group's steering committee, which would determine whether there is room for regional economic cooperation under such conditions.

Responding to Ashtiyah's remarks, 'Oded 'Eran, head of the Israeli delegation, said that Israel and the Palestinians discuss disputed issues on the bilateral level and expressed opposition to raising these issues in the multilateral forum. 'Eran said Ashtiyah's remarks contain inaccuracies and stressed that the Gaza-Jericho agreement is binding on both sides.

'Eran added that there were times when nearly 100,000 Palestinians worked in Israel and that although Israel regretted it when the situation changed (following serious terror attacks—Y.W.), it was the Palestinians who were responsible, because Israel cannot leave the door open to violence.

The multinational working group on regional economic cooperation concluded its Bonn session yesterday by endorsing a decision in principle to formulate proposals for the establishment of three regional institutions by the time the economic committee next convenes in Amman in October 1995.

Plans for Rabin-al-Asad Summit Reported

TA2001133595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Jan 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by Aluf Ben and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The negotiations between Israel and Syria will now focus on preparing a summit between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, which will pave the way for a peace treaty between the two countries.

Over recent weeks, the two parties have indicated their desire to reach an agreement soon: Rabin told the Arab newspaper AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI that he seeks an urgent meeting with al-Asad because that is the best way to propel the negotiations out of the current deadlock and achieve understanding and firm decisions. Al-Asad told U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos that "we are ready to achieve peace within a week" and blamed Rabin for the delays.

According to the proposal now being formulated, U.S. President Bill Clinton will invite al-Asad and Rabin for a lengthy series of talks, Camp David-style, during which they will attempt to reach an agreement on the central tenets of the peace accord. This week, Rabin said the Syrians have rejected proposals on holding bilateral talks and are insisting that U.S. officials participate in the negotiations. In the past, al-Asad told the Americans that it is very important to carefully prepare a summit between Rabin and himself, because if such a meeting were to fail, the peace process would be plunged into a serious crisis.

Israeli sources confirmed that the talks between Ambassadors Rabinovich and Walid al-Mu'allim in Washington were designed to prepare a meeting between the two leaders but said that more time is needed for this and that the Syrians will be those setting the tempo. The sources asserted that "if al-Asad decides to hold intensive meetings between the two ambassadors from now on and to speed up the talks between military officials, preparations for the summit could be expedited." The sources added that Israel will alter its strategy in the negotiations with Syria and will no longer demand that the Syrians initiate confidence-building measures or public diplomatic overtures in order to convince the Israeli public that they are serious in their intentions to achieve peace. [passage omitted]

The sources also said domestic political pressures, which are making it more difficult for Rabin to reach tough decisions on the Syrian track, must be taken into account. Commenting on this issue yesterday, Amb. Itamar Rabinovich said the Syrians are interested in reaching an agreement and understand that they cannot dictate conditions to Israel. On the other hand, Rabinovich explained, it is impossible to know whether Syria understands Israel's red lines and whether Syria's rate of progress in the talks will conform to the political timetables of Israel, the United States, and the international community.

Rabinovich said it is hard for the side most interested in accelerating the talks to set the tempo because once it is perceived as either being in a hurry or in a position of weakness, the other side immediately raises its demands. Rabinovich asserted that Israel is signaling to the Syrians that despite its interest in reaching an arrangement, it is not in a hurry. "In order for the negotiations to proceed successfully, politics in Israel has certain timeframes, which are dictated by elections, among other things," Rabinovich said, noting that "this timeframe is not unlimited."

Rabinovich added that the U.S. political system cannot devote all of its time and attention to the negotiations between Syria and Israel. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has recently been preoccupied with other international crises, such as the collapse of the Mexican peso and the fighting in Chechnya and Bosnia. Rabinovich recalled the significance of the achievements made last spring, when Syria dropped its demand for an Israeli commitment to carry out a full withdrawal on the Golan Heights as a precondition for the continuation of the talks. Now they are also ready to discuss security arrangements without this precondition. Israel is now awaiting Syrian Amb. al-Mu'allim's return to Washington from a lengthy vacation in Damascus in order to find out what instructions he received from al-Asad. Speaking to Israeli correspondents yesterday, Rabinovich said the talks on the ambassadorial level will resume in the near future. Rabinovich added that a decision will then follow on whether to resume the talks between military officers or first send U.S. peace process coordinator Dennis Ross to the region.

Rabinovich said that at their meetings, the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff had presented their views with regard to the security arrangements but did not hold any negotiations on specific details. Rabinovich expressed the assessment that although the reports of disappointment and dissatisfaction coming from Damascus reflect a gap between the positions of the two parties, they are also part of Syria's negotiating strategy. The ambassador said the Syrians believe this will lead to concessions from Israel. Rabinovich said Syria's decision to send its chief of staff to meet with his Israeli counterpart is highly significant. [passage omitted]

Multilateral Talks' Steering Committee Meetings Open

NC2201180895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1723 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—The multilateral talks steering committee meetings began in Cairo today within the framework of the Middle East Peace Conference. The meetings, which will last two days, will be attended by delegations representing Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Japan and the EU, in addition to the U.S. and Russian delegations in their capacity as the cosponsors of the peace process. The multilateral talks steering committee will discuss what has been achieved within the framework of the five subcommittees of these talks. These are the economic development committee, the water committee, the security committee, the arms control committee, and the refugees and environment committee. The Egyptian delegation to the meetings is headed by ambassador Nabil Fahmi, adviser to the foreign minister.

Committee Continues Talks

NC2301093195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0910 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Jan (MENA)—The multilateral talks steering committee stemming from the Middle East peace conference continued its meetings this morning to discuss the results of the deliberations of its five subcommittees. These are the refugees, water, environment, economic development, security, and nonproliferation of weapons subcommittees.

The Egyptian delegation to these meetings is being headed by Ambassador Nabil Fahmi, adviser to the foreign minister. Participating in the meetings are Palestine, Jordan, Israel, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Norway, Canada, the European Union, and Japan, as well as the United States and Russia in their capacities as cosponsors of the peace conference. The steering committee is expected to conclude its meetings, which started yesterday, later today.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Phones Rabin on Bet Lid Attack

JN2201162395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestine News Agency reports that His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat spoke on the phone with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin this afternoon to convey condolences in his name, and on behalf of the National Authority and the Palestinian people, to the families of the victims of the two explosions which took place in Bet Lid this morning, killing 18 Israelis and wounding 60 others, 3 of whom sustained serious injuries.

President Yasir 'Arafat described the operation as a criminal act that threatens the entire peace process. In statements to the Palestine News Agency, President Yasir 'Arafat said that every time progress is achieved in the negotiations for the transfer of powers and the release of detainees, some carry out criminal acts which seek to halt this progress.

Al-Tibi To Offer Condolences to Victims' Families

JN2201135395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Gaza, His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, has sent his adviser Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi to offer condolences to the families of the victims [of the Bet Lid attack].

Dr. Nabil Sha'th condemned the operation, describing it is an attempt to abort the peace process. Dr. Sha'th added: We reject these attacks, irrespective of their source, on the humanitarian and political level as they are attacks against civilians.

Dr. Sha'th added: This attack takes place on the morning of the Israeli cabinet meeting to discuss the issue of settlements and one day before the meeting of the prisoners committee which is scheduled to discuss tomorrow the issue of the Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli jails. Dr. Sha'th said that this attack seeks to obstruct the peace process and abort all the attempts to achieve a comprehensive and secure peace.

Sha'th Condemns Bet Lid Attack, Perpetrators

JN2201113895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1103 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Interview with Nabil Sha'th, PA official in charge of planning and international cooperation, by Ahmad 'Ubaydat on 22 January; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Ubaydat] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, we have seen another tragic event within the series of killing and violence in this country. What is your comment on this incident?

[Sha'th] My personal comment and my official comment as a representative of the PA [Palestinian Authority], is that this is a criminal deed which we resolutely condemn. We oppose the killing of innocent civilians and the continuation of the cycle of violence which brings only more violence and killing and the destruction of the peace process. As I see it, the timing of this operation casts doubt on its aim, given that it has taken place only one day before the meeting of the Palestinian-Israeli committee to discuss the release of Palestinian prisoners and consider the settlement activity and the halting of the settlement activity. The timing really shows that the only aim of the operation was to sabotage the peace process, add more obstacles on the path of the process, and postpone the release of Palestinian prisoners. This leaves us with the only option of denouncing and expressing indignation against this operation and its perpetrators.

['Ubaydat] Thank You.

[Sha'th] Thank You.

Jihad Official on Bet Lid Operation, 'Arafat, Rabin

JN2201180995 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Fathi al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement "in Palestine," by Kamal Tarabayh on 22 January; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Tarabayh] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, do you confirm that the Islamic Jihad Movement carried out the operation today?

[Al-Shaqaqi] Yes, yes, I confirm this. Our mujahidin this morning targeted an assembly point for the Zionist military which is a major assembly point from where the soldiers proceed to their military bases. For us, the target was a military one, as the casualty toll in the ranks of the Zionist enemy shows.

[Tarabayh] Dr. al-Shaqaqi, the head of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] Yasir 'Arafat has denounced and condemned this operation. Do you have any comment on this?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I believe the PNA head should do something useful for the Palestinian people, instead of condemning the hero mujahidin who are avenging the blood of the Palestinian police who found no one to avenge them. The heroes are avenging the ongoing settlement activities in the West Bank and Jerusalem. They are avenging the judaization of Jerusalem. I ask the head of the administrative self-rule authority to do something useful besides begging Rabin to give him something, and not to condemn such heroic operations expressing our people's will, and to proceed toward the attainment of our people's aspirations and interests.

[Tarabayh] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin threatened, or promised, to completely and definitively separate Palestinians and Israelis. What is your stand on this proposal. Do you view it as something positive or negative?

[Al-Shaqaqi] In any case, let Yitzhaq Rabin do what he wants. For more than 47 years, we have been experiencing all kinds of torture, pressure, and repression at the hands of the enemy and the Zionist occupation. Whether he separates us or not, our mujahidin will continue to deal blows to the enemy in the West Bank, in Gaza, and also deep in enemy territory. Rabin said he gave no permits to the Islamic Jihad. I tell him that the Islamic Jihad is capable of penetrating all the fictitious barriers they erect between the various parts of occupied Palestine.

[Tarabayh] Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, with respect to the timing of this operation, is there a specific timing or a symbolic meaning for choosing this day in particular?

[Al-Shaqaqi] First of all, the operation comes within the framework of our ongoing jihad. No specific day is meant. However, I cannot deny that we reject the so-called peace process that is under way, particularly that our people are not getting any of their rights during these negotiations. That's why we target the unjust negotiations that legalize the occupation and settlements.

[Tarabayh] My last question Dr. al-Shaqaqi, does this operation, or this type of operation, seek to foil the agreements between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government or does it seek the the removal of the Israeli occupation?

[Al-Shaqaqi] First, we do not seek through our jihad to embarrass the administrative self-rule authority. Through our jihad, we seek to liberate our occupied homeland. This is the basic objective. However, I would like to emphasize that we are not bound by the agreements that 'Arafat signed with Rabin.

Vows Continued Struggle

NC2201184795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1750 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad "in Palestine," by Jihad al-'Idan on 22 January; place not given; from the "News and Reports" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-'Idan] Doctor, we would like you to tell us about the jihad operation in Netanya, north of Tel Aviv, today. Was it planned for some time or did it come on the spur of the moment?

[Al-Shaqaqi] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Undoubtedly, the operation was carefully planned for some time. It was carried out by two mujahidin from the Islamic Jihad in Palestine. One of them was mujahid Salah [family name indistinct] from Rafah in the Gaza Strip, and the other was Anwar Muhammad 'Atiyah Sukkar, 25, from al-Shaja'iyah in Gaza City. The operation targeted a station where Israeli militarymen assemble on their way to their bases throughout occupied Palestine. As I said, the operation was planned for a time to ensure a maximum loss of Israeli military men. The target was military, and as you know, the majority of those killed or wounded were military men. The enemy announced that 16 out of the 18 fatalities are military men.

[Al-'Idan] Doctor, what is the reaction of the Zionist enemy?

[Al-Shaqaqi] As usual, the Zionist enemy is in a state of great panic. There are meetings, condemnations, outcries, decisions, and so on. The Zionist opposition is calling for the overthrow of the government, for holding new elections, for building new settlements in Jerusalem, and so on.

[Al-'Idan] Does the operation send a specific message to the Zionist enemy?

[Al-Shaqaqi] The operation, no doubt, is in the context of our jihad. We tell the occupation that no matter what agreements it signs, they are not binding on us. Our battle is continuing, and the occupation's attempt to turn the battle from a military one to a political confrontation will fail, because from the very beginning, the occupation has been based on violence and terrorism, and it will only understand the language of arms and force. The message to everybody is that this dirty peace, these dirty agreements are not binding on the Islamic Jihad or the Palestinian people. We will continue our struggle against them.

[Al-'Idan] The Zionist enemy's radio attributed the operation to both the Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. What is the purpose of this [word indistinct]?

[Al-Shaqaqi] I think there is a technical error concerning the attribution of the operation to the brothers in Hamas. Or perhaps the enemy wanted to generalize. But the brothers in Hamas did not claim responsibility for the operation; they did not issue any statement about it. The operation was carried out by the Islamic Jihad; and it was planned a long time ago. The martyrs who fell today are members of the Islamic Jihad. The brothers in Hamas have had the honor of carrying out many other operations.

[Al-'Idan] Thank you very much, doctor.

[Al-Shaqaqi] You are welcome.

West Bank Hamas Urges Dialogue; Gaza Hamas Condones Attack

TA2201113195 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1000 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] To the best of my knowledge, no organization has claimed responsibility for the Bet Lid attack as of this period in time, although it has every appearance of having been perpetrated by one of the Islamic bodies—either Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or Islamic Jihad.

My colleague Linda Sherzer and I have just spoken with Shaykh Jamil Hamami, one of the more prominent West Bank figures who are very close to Hamas, who had been imprisoned for several years for having served as chief liaison officer between the Gaza and West Bank Hamas chapters.

Here is what he man told us: All the recent incidents—those in 'Afula, Hadera, Tel Aviv, as well as that of today, are the result of a series of events that have taken place in the territories since the Hebron massacre. To quote him, all these events are the results of a unfair situation that has been causing grief both to the Palestinian and the Israeli nation.

And then he got to the interesting part: He said Hamas and the Israeli Government should start a dialogue on the cessation of violence against civilians. In response to my attempt to clarify his remarks, he said: Let us launch a dialogue through a third party—an Arab, Islamic, or even a European government—that will address ways to stop attacks on civilians on both sides. [passage omitted]

[An announcer-read report later in the same newscast says: "'Imad al-Faluji, one of the Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip, says today's attack is a predictable, natural reaction to what he termed provocation on the part of the Israeli Government. In a conversation with our correspondent Linda Sherzer, al-Faluji said Israel is driving the Islamic movement to this course of action. Asked if he fears difficulties in the Hamas and Islamic Jihad relationship with 'Arafat's administration, al-Faluji replied: We have declared from the outset that the Palestinian Authority does not represent us, that we disagree with its actions, that 'Arafat's arrangements do not bind us, and that we are not a party to these accords."]

Hamas Proposal To Halt Attacks on Civilians Intact

TA2301063795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israeli security sources say that the Palestinian Authority [PA] has been avoiding taking measures against the political leaderships of the Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], whose preachings and incitement encourage young suicide operators to join the circle of Islamic violence. 'Abdallah al-Shami, leader of the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, issued a call last night for pursuing the attacks against Israel. Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin Ben-Menahem recording] Shaykh al-Shami is an example that adequately proves that the PA has not been acting against the Islamic Jihad leadership within its territory. After the booby-trapped bicycle attack at the Netzarim junction, al-Shami outwitted the Palestinian police, and they failed to arrest him despite his continued calls for attacks on Israel.

At a news conference at his home last night, only a few hours after the suicide attack at Bet Lid, he called for suicide attacks against Israel. What do you want to tell Rabin? one journalist asked him, and al-Shami replied: I want to tell them that there will be no security or peace as long as our people have no security or peace. As long as our people are dispersed in the world and we live under siege, there will be no peace. Ours is a fighting people, and it will never surrender. [passage omitted]

Asked about suicide attacks, Shaykh al-Shami replied: Islam accepts suicide attacks and does not ban them. Our brethren do not commit them because they have despaired of their lives or their tough living conditions but out of love and the wish to meet God and his emissaries and to cause as much damage as possible to the occupation authorities and their soldiers, al-Shami said. We know that such attacks are not the solution, but they keep the problem alive and prevent the occupation forces from living in security.

Shaykh 'Imad al-Faluji, a leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, justified the attack at the Bet Lid junction but noted that Hamas' proposal to Israel to remove innocent people from the circle of violence still stands, under the following conditions: [passage omitted] Israel must stop the killing of Palestinians, release all the Palestinian detainees at once, and stop the provocations and the violations of the Palestinians' rights.

To date, the PA has refrained from taking measures against the political leaderships of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and has only warned them. Israeli security sources say there is no doubt that the political leaderships of these organizations play an important role in enlisting young suicide operators to the circle of jihad and that their preachings largely foster Islamic terror against Israel. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 23 January adds: "Thousands of Islamic Jihad supporters rallied near the homes of the two suicide terrorists in the Gaza Strip last night and openly expressed their joy over the massacre at the Bet Lid junction. Hundreds took part in a symbolic funeral held for the two, our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports."]

Fatah Leader Regrets Israeli Measures, Lauds Police

TA2301075895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reacting to the cabinet decision last night, Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq, a prominent Fatah leader in the Gaza Strip, said that it constitutes a blow to the peace process. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin recording] ['Abd-al-Raziq] It is a blow to the peace process; it encourages extremism on both sides: the Palestinian and the Israeli; and it constitutes a success for the opposition.

[Ben-Menahem] What will happen in Gaza in the wake of the events? Do you think the Palestinian Police will arrest Islamic Jihad activists?

['Abd-al-Raziq] I am very sorry about all the measures adopted by Israel. They do not help advance the political process. I think the Palestinian Police has done and is doing whatever is necessary to increase security in the areas under its control. Extreme terror is embraced by a handful of people who do not represent the majority. We must not let them win. [end recording]

Jericho Radio Regrets Israeli Government Decisions

JN2301083195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0620 GMT 23 Jan 95

[Political commentary by Yusuf al-Qazzaz]

[FBIS Translated Text] The planners and perpetrators of the Bet Lid incident in which Israelis were killed and wounded was aimed at killing the peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians.

This incident, which is condemned by all Palestinians, has prompted many Israeli officials to deviate from the correct path and influence the decisions made by the Rabin government during its ordinary and extraordinary meetings yesterday. Some officials called for suspending the talks with the PLO. Meanwhile, the government of Mr. Rabin decided to continue the construction work inside the Jerusalem settlements and ordered a total closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

As we join all those who have condemned the Bet Lid incident, we also express our deep regret over the calls and decisions of the Israeli Government, which will only exacerbate the difficulties facing the peace process and strengthen the feeling of despair among the Palestinians. This only serves the enemies of peace among both the Palestinians and Israelis.

Since the signing of the Oslo accord, we have constantly warned against the danger of postponing or obstructing the implementation of the agreement signed by the PLO and Israel, including the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, halting settlements, and the release of prisoners. Resolving these issues would contribute to entrenching the peace process and would help the Palestinians build their homeland on the path of establishing their state.

We say once again that as the Bet Lid incident was condemned by the Palestinians, we should also dwell on the killing of Palestinians near some Israeli military checkpoints. These killings have increased. Whenever we start building and giving momentum to the peace process we find that people are killed here or there, a settlement is built here or there, or a house is demolished in this village or that city.

The Bet Lid incident, which we condemn, and the daily killings, which we denounce, place the Palestinians and Israelis in a strangling political double standard. The agreement to achieve peace is based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the Oslo accords between the Palestinians and Israelis are the tool which will implement the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. The implementation of these accords would result in stopping settlement activities, redeploying the Israeli Army, discussing the status of Jerusalem, releasing the prisoners, ending the killings, and safeguarding security in a firm way so that peace will really prevail. We concur with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin who said that complete separation between the Palestinians and Israelis is a practical step and a field mechanism to activate the peace process. Peace is a Palestinian strategic decision. The first step to activate the peace process is to achieve Israeli redeployment in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israeli withdrawal from these territories.

We will reiterate what we said yesterday; namely, peace has one concept and one meaning. This peace requires that both the Palestinians and Israelis should make sacrifices and show patience. Peace will place the region on the threshold of a new phase whose bases are stability, construction, and coexistence, not only between the Palestinians and the Israelis, but also throughout this region and the world.

Israeli Measures Against Journalists Denounced

JN2301104695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Information Ministry has denounced the arbitrary measures taken by the occupation authorities against the Palestinians and their institutions. The ministry said in a statement issued today that the Israeli occupation forces have recently imposed more restrictions on journalists, prevented them from reporting on events, arrested a number of journalists, and encroached on their institutions.

The Palestinian Information Ministry said it considered the Israeli measures a blatant violation of the freedom of press and international charters. The ministry asked the world to stop the Israeli onslaught on Palestinian journalists and their institutions.

Political Editor Calls For Self-Restraint

JN2201204495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1855 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Commentary by political editor: "Valuable Peace Deserves Patience"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinians from all walks of life agree that the crime that took place near Netanya, 25 km from Tel Aviv today, is a terrorist crime that Palestinian public opinion and the Palestinian National Authority denounce. So long as we have opted for peace, and there are ongoing negotiations between us and the Israelis on the transfer of power and the Israeli army's redeployment prior to reaching the final stage on the basis of the land for peace principle and the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, any terrorist inroad is an attempt to sabotage the peace process on which the parties have agreed at the encouragement of the international community.

In the same manner that Israel has to abide by the agreements and prepare the atmosphere for expediting the meticulous implementation of these agreements, particularly those on settlements and the release of more prisoners, we, on our part, too, have to observe meticulous abidance to boost trust and put an end to decades of hatred and wars that only will result in more victims.

From this premise, what is required at all times is to exercise self-restraint and not to be dragged into issuing menacing slogans. Terrorism cannot be countered with terrorist reactions, even on the level of making verbal threats and menaces and inciting blood thirsty extremists here and there. Terrorism can be countered only with more joint action and cooperation to end the shedding of blood and the wanton killings that target defenseless people.

Therefore, the calls some Israelis, including Israeli officials, make for collective punishment, or to keep the Palestinian people from performing prayers in the al-Aqsa Mosque all through the blessed month of Ramadan, or to impose a security siege on the West Bank and a closure on the Gaza Strip, or to suspend the entire peace process are emotional calls with terrorist implications. In this respect, we recall the daily killings of Palestinians, whether by Israeli extremists or the Israeli army itself. We have been doing our best so that they may not provoke emotional reactions out of concern for the peace process, which should succeed and come to fruition.

Peace has only one concept and one explicit meaning: The duty to offer sacrifices and be patient on both fronts, the Israeli and Palestinian front. Peace is very prohibitive when we set our eyes on it as a strategic and fateful objective. Such a peace places the region on the threshold of a new stage based on stability, development, and constructive coexistence not only between the Israelis and the Palestinians but also in the entire region and the world.

Sha'th Comments on Talks With Jordan, Settlements

NC2301091695 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 23 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Nabil Sha'th, PA official in charge of planning and international cooperation, in Gaza, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. Sha'th, good morning on the Voice of the Arabs.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] There is a Palestinian-Jordanian meeting currently convening in Amman. Could we learn about the nature of this meeting?

[Sha'th] There are a series of meetings being held in Jordan to prepare for brother President Abu-'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat's] visit to Amman very soon to meet His Majesty King Husayn. This visit and meeting will crown the many efforts made to arrange all issues that were points of dispute or under discussion between the PA [Palestinian Authority] and the PLO on the one hand and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the other.

Therefore, these days there are representatives from the PA for the economy, education, health, passport affairs, and postal affairs. These are all issues over which agreement should be reached for Jordan to accept Palestinian certificates, passports, and stamps and for doors to open to the correct and sound relations in the political and economic aspects. During this visit a number of problems will be solved, such as that of Jerusalem, which has raised many doubts between the two sides. I believe that it has ended, thank God, with a full recognition of the total responsibility of the PA and the Palestinian people over Jerusalem and its holy places from all aspects. I believe this visit will conclude all these crises and will open a new door to all kinds of inter-Arab reconciliation between the PA and Jordan.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. Sha'th, there are also Jordanian-Palestinian-Egyptian tripartite meetings being held in Cairo. What is the nature of these meetings?

[Sha'th] These meetings are designed to set the grounds for the meeting of the quadripartite Palestinian-Egyptian-Jordanian-Israeli committee, which will take measures regarding the return of the Palestinian refugees to Palestine, that is, those who were forced to leave their country in 1967 and after. Therefore, the initial coordination is Palestinian-Egyptian-Jordanian. After that, meetings will take place with the Israeli side to start implementing measures for the return of the refugees.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What is the Israeli stance on the return of the refugees?

[Sha'th] As a matter of form, they do not object and claim that they have to apply the agreement. The implementation of the agreement starts with a meeting of the quadripartite committee. In actual fact, we have to wait and see. When we, the Arab side, are ready, we will then see what the Israeli stance will be.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. Sha'th, regarding the settlements the statements we have heard recently from Israel have brought this issue out in the open. There are some sides who believe that this is a dangerous obstacle in the way of negotiations between you and Israel. Has some solution been found on this issue?

[Sha'th] Undoubtedly, this issue is high on the list of obstacles to an agreement and things that may hinder the peace process. This is because the issue of settlements has been at the core of the Palestinian-Israeli and Arab-Israeli conflict for 47 years. The Israelis are occupying the land, establishing what they call material facts on it, bringing people to live on this land, and expelling the Palestinians. After that, they claim we should negotiate, and then after some time, they say we should annex. The Israeli annexation of Palestinian land has been at the core of the conflict because this is truly what makes the Israeli occupation different from the British, French, Portuguese, and other occupations. The Israeli kind leads to judaization, expulsion, and annexation. Settlement is the Israeli front and spearhead for expropriating Palestinian land and scattering the Palestinian people.

The repetition and continuation of such acts in the West Bank, particularly in the area around Jerusalem, constitutes the gravest dangers confronting the Palestinian people and the Arab people in general. We believe that Israel has to freeze settlements completely in preparation for negotiations over the removal of settlements from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as they were completely removed from the Sinai after the Egyptian-Israeli agreement.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin announced after meeting President Yasir 'Arafat that settlement-building will be frozen. Can we expect Israel to adhere to this declaration and commitment?

[Sha'th] We hope it will. Israel, according to Foreign Minister Peres and Prime Minister Rabin, announced that it will decrease the area of settlement expansion by preventing the expropriation of new Palestinian land for settlements, not expanding existing settlements using government funds, not allowing the establishment of new settlements, and finally not responding to the call to expand the area of Jerusalem that does not fall under any restrictions in this settlement process. Of course, there are still many gaps. For example, settlements could be funded through nongovernment funds. The issue of expansion inside what is called Jerusalem which has been annexed, or which they claim to have annexed to Israel in 1967, is a disputed matter, since we reject this annexation and believe that Arab Jerusalem is occupied territory, just like Gaza and the West Bank. Settlements should not be built on it, as they should not in any other area. We hope Rabin's and Peres' statements are a beginning to freezing all settlements. We are fully alert to this and will not accept any gaps in this matter.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. Sha'th, while with you on the open phone lines between Cairo and the Gaza Strip, we thank you a great deal and welcome you on the Voice of the Arabs.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

Algeria

EU Governments 'Rethinking' Support

LD2101101495 London THE GUARDIAN in English 21 Jan 95 p 11

[Report by Ian Black: "Europe Cools to Algiers After Its Peace Plan Snub"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] European governments are distancing themselves from the embattled military regime in Algeria after it summarily rejected a peace plan put forward by opposition groups, including the banned Islamic Salvation front (FIS).

Spain and Germany this week followed France in welcoming the offer to end three years of bloody civil war, while Britain is expected to join the growing trend at Monday's meeting of European Union [EU] foreign ministers in Brussels.

Until now EU members have called for peaceful dialogue in Algeria—where some 30,000 people have died since 1991—but basically supported the regime of General Lamine Zeroual. Britain in particular has shunned contact with the FIS and co-operates with France in monitoring suspected subversives.

At the same time, Foreign Office officials have made clear—especially since France took over the EU presidency this month—that they oppose French demands to continue pumping money into Algeria, preferring trade to aid.

"The gut reflex is for cash but the deteriorating situation does affect the way one looks at it," a British official said yesterday. "There is a policy question to address as to what extent we continue to stand four square behind the regime."

Such comments are part of a broader change in European attitudes that could put real pressure on Gen Zeroual and the military men who call the shots in Algiers.

"There is a shift here," a Western diplomat said. "There is some rethinking of just how closely governments should be associated with this regime. People are positioning themselves a little more closely to the Algerian people and this sends a signal to the government there that they cannot count on their friends in the West to save them from the mistakes they're making."

Escalating violence has forced governments to reconsider their positions for some months now. But there has been new urgency since last week's intiative—after multiparty talks in Rome—for the FIS to return to public life and for moves towards a coalition government before new elections. This was brusquely rejected by the Algerian government.

The Rome talks involved the FIS, the National Liberation Front (FLN), Algeria's former ruling party, and the Socialist Forces Front (FFS)—which between them won 80 per cent of the votes in the 1991 first round of elections later annulled by the government.

United States support for the Rome plan has helped shift the Europeans, but the change in France, the former colonial power and supporter of the regime is what counts.

In Paris, where Algeria is a domestic political issue, thinking has altered in the wake of the Christmas hijacking of an Air France jet and the Rome talks, though no policy change is thought likely before presidential elections in April.

Alain Juppe, the foreign minister, noted the result of the Rome meeting "with great interest", an ostensibly bland statement widely interpreted as an important signal to Algiers.

"It means that the regime in Algiers cannot now take it for granted that the West's only option is continuation of that regime," said one Paris-based diplomat.

"The key issue now remains whether the regime judges that it has the French over a barrel, that is to say, will have no alternative but to continue funding and encouraging others to reschedule debts.

"That money means the regime can go on fighting the war for the indefinite future. If they believe there is a risk and the money will dry up then they are more likely to move towards dialogue.

FLN Secretary General Favors Truce

BR2001142995 Paris LIBERATION in French 20 Jan 95 p 11

[Interview with Abdelhamid Mehri, secretary general of the National Liberation Front, by Jose Garcon in Rome; date not given: "'FIS Cannot Be Ignored'"—first paragraph is LIBERATION introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Secretary General of the FLN [National Liberation Front] for five years, Abdelhamid Mehri, 68 years of age, granted us an interview during the meeting in Rome between the main Algerian political forces, where he represented the former Single Party. After presiding over the country's destiny for a quarter of a century, the FLN is currently opposed to the "totally repressive" policy followed by the government.

[Garcon] What are we to make of the opposition platform adopted in Rome?

[Mehri] The platform is what unites us on the essential matter: that everyone should come out in favor of a peaceful alternative to the crisis and create the conditions for coming up with an appeal capable of stopping the violence. It has the advantage of coming from all the opposition forces that count, and represents a chance to break the deadlock. Indeed, we do not feel that there are only two players involved in the current conflict (fundamentalists and the government—LIBERATION editor's note). It is only the armed conflict that is bipolar. However, the rupture in the country is much greater: The government is in confrontation with a majority of the population. So far, the opposition has been fragmented. Today, nobody is giving up their plan for society, but we have found enough reasons to make a common proposal for escaping the crisis.

[Garcon] You met with Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, the main FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] leaders, before the meeting in Rome. Have they really decided to negotiate?

[Mehri] Ali Benhadj has undoubtedly become more political, as has his way of looking at things. That was already apparent in his last letter, even if the more "political" aspects have consciously been erased to justify the suspension of the "dialogue" and only the inflammatory terminology aimed at the militants has been highlighted. I think that they wanted to halt the dialogue last September, because they were afraid it would succeed—especially after the overtures contained in the letters from Abassi Madani.

[Garcon] Are the fundamentalists prepared to renounce violence?

[Mehri] The FIS has no interest in seeing the current cycle of violence continue. It is prepared to engage in dialogue. However, it would refuse if we proposed things to it that do not stand up. The FIS's legitimate desire is to safeguard its unity at a crucial stage: Wanting to divide it would be a bad idea. You would have to be naive to think that the Islamists will come and sit down at the negotiating table and abandon their troops. What we have to know is whether the main concern of the authorities is indeed to put an end to the violence or to get Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj to call for a truce that will be not be heeded.

[Garcon] Why doesn't the Rome document call for a "truce?"

[Mehri] I am clearly in favor of a future call for a truce between all forces. However, it was out of the question to do the work of the authorities. We have been saying since 1992 that the fact of condemning violence is not enough to stop it. If you really want to find a peaceful solution to the problem and you accept that to do so the FIS cannot be ignored then you have to gather together all those involved and lay the way open for a real call for a truce.

[Garcon] What do you think is the minimum condition for a future meeting of the opposition in Algiers?

[Mehri] All the political forces of the opposition—including the FIS and on an equal footing with the other formations—should be able to participate in a meeting with the authorities. That would show that the first barrier had come down and that something had changed in the authorities' conception of how to manage the crisis.

[Garcon] Do you now fear provocation looking to hinder the process started in Rome?

[Mehri] Such provocation never stopped.

[Garcon] The Algerian Government has condemned "foreign involvement" in the Rome meeting...

[Mehri] Those words are used, like the word "internationalization," in all the wrong ways. When you speak of the Algerian crisis abroad it becomes internationalized. If, however, you argue on the side of the authorities and in favor of the continuation of the conflict, then that, on the other hand, is seen as a sign of patriotism!

It is this method—dialogue between Algerians—which the authorities did not want, which now allows us to glimpse an end to the crisis.

FIS Leadership on Foreign Support, Rome Accord

May Meet With U.S. Officials

NC2101123895 Paris AFP in English 1207 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Jan 21 (AFP)—Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) will meet with US officials next week to seek help in pressuring France to end its support for the Algiers government, a senior FIS official was quoted as saying Saturday.

Anouar Haddam, a senior official of the fundamentalist movement's leadership in exile, told the Saudi daily Al-Sharq al-Awsat that FIS hoped Washington's favorable response to peace proposals drawn up last week by Algerian opposition parties "will be followed by pressure on French leaders who continue to support the military against the Algerian people."

"We will this week have contacts on the subject with US officials," Haddam told the daily from Washington, where he lives.

The FIS, which has been waging a bloody guerrilla war against the military-backed regime in Algiers since early 1992, accuses France of providing significant military and economic aid to the Algerian government.

It joined with other opposition movements in Rome last week to draw up a series of proposals for ending the civil war, but the plans have been rejected by the Algiers government and the two principal armed movements inside the country.

Rejects Islamic Dictatorship

LD2101102795 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An interview with Rabah Kebir, chairman of the executive mission of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] abroad, is published today by LA CROIX.

Mr. Rabah Kebir said that neither the Army nor the Islamic opposition is capable of obtaining a military victory today. On the other hand, he rejects an Islamic dictatorship, just because it would be a dictatorship. He thinks the future government, whatever its nature, should encourage the existence of a strong opposition.

As for the government's reaction to the National Contract signed last week by the opposition, he said it was moderate. This, in his opinion, means that the government is thinking about this peace offer.

Denies Arms Smuggling

MM2001161495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Jan 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil and Majid al-Khatib: "Rabah Kebir Tells AL-HAYAH: We Have Confidence in Judiciary, Our Activities Legal; Germany Prosecutes Salvation Front on Arms Smuggling Charges"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Cologne—Some hours ago German Authorities embarked on a move—the first of its kind at such a level—to curb the activities of Algerian groups operating on its territory. The German prosecution office in Karlsruhe announced that it has launched a legal investigation into the activities of Algerian groups, including the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], following its receipt of evidence of and information about the involvement of Algerian individuals in smuggling arms to their countries. [passage omitted]

AL-HAYAH contacted Shaykh Rabah Kebir, chairman of the FIS Executive Committee abroad, from London yesterday to ask him his opinion of the German move. He said: "We have confidence in the (German) judiciary, which is authorized to investigate any accusations leveled at anyone. Our work does not violate the law." By saying this Kebir is distancing himself from any link with any person who might prove to have links with arms smuggling or any illegal activities. Elements close to the shaykh, who lives as a refugee in Cologne, say that the campaign is the result of the pressures exerted by media services and by some other parties—a reference to France and Algeria. They add that the campaign harms the FIS' reputation, because it is not accusing one of its members but "implicating the Front as a whole because maybe one of its supporters is involved in legal proceedings. They should interrogate him, not condemn everyone because they are Algerians." [passage omitted]

Has 'Nothing To Concede'

MM2001154095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Jan 95 p2

[Interview with Kemal Qammazi, spokesman of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front at Home, by Qusayy Salih al-Darwish in Paris; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Darwish] The Rome agreement includes practical measures for the establishment of peace, some of them expected of the government and some, it is understood, expected of the [Islamic] Salvation Front [FIS], such as a declaration of a truce and a call for an end to violence. Some sources say that the two FIS leaders are proposing that these measures should be taken simultaneously by the two sides. What is the truth about the proposals of the FIS leaders? What are the details and the limits?

[Qammazi] Shaykh Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj did not send participants to the Rome meeting as claimed by the media. As I said before, it was a question of observing the proceedings of the meeting as much as possible through an FIS representative. What took place was an internal matter not divulged to the media. As regards the declaration of a truce, call for suspension [of violence], and other relevant matters, as Shaykh Madani and Shaykh Belhadj say: "That is not a matter for one individual or group to decide. Such matters cannot be decided except after a meeting of the Shura Council of the confirmed [al-thabitah] leadership as stated in the 6 September 1994 message signed by the shaykhs and addressed to the presidency and the parties. [quotation marks as published]

[Al-Darwish] The agreement condemns the killing of civilians and foreigners and the destruction of public property but the FIS leaderships at home and abroad hesitate a lot before condemning such operations, and sometimes they do not condemn them. Does the FIS have a clear principled position on this matter, and why not declare it?

[Qammazi] The issue should be viewed as a whole. Its components should not be divided and judged separately. We believe that this is a result of the crisis that has arisen since independence. [passage omitted] We say that the country used to be safe and secure, people felt safe, honor and property and funds were protected, and foreigners lived in peace without harm from anyone. As regards this emergency and exceptional situation in the life of the Algerian Mulsim people, as well as everything resulting from the suspension of the election process, we hold the regime which usurped power responsible for that.

We notice that whenever there is an incident or operation, the FIS is asked to condemn it. We say that the FIS first condemned those who stopped the election process and confiscated the Algerian Muslim people's rights, and we warned of the consequences of that suicidal decision. It [the FIS] had a valid argument and it exonerated itself at the beginning and before the outbreak of events. Furthermore, attention must be drawn to the following two points in this connection:

1. The FIS is not necessarily responsible for every operation that occurs. Many ugly acts are committed and then attributed to the FIS in order to smear its image and distort its just and legitimate cause and portray it as a criminal and terrorist cause when it is actually the cause of wronged people demanding their rights.

2. There is a two-faced approach to Algerian events. Most media do not mention the victims from the FIS and the innocent general public. Thousands are killed and die in secret, and some die under torture. Cadres, doctors, lawyers, imams, engineers, journalists, and intellectuals who belong to or sympathize with the FIS are killed and nobody hears about them and nobody condemns their murder. [passage omitted] To those who ask us to condemn we say: If you cannot be fair in what you say, at least remain neutral and do not take sides against the will of the people trying to regain their usurped rights which they are entitled to do under the Islamic Shari'ah. All laws and international organizations recognize peoples' right to resist injustice and forcible usurpation of power. So why should the Algerian people be denied the right acknowledged for all peoples?

[Al-Darwish] Some FIS leaders have joined the the Armed Islamic Group [GIA] including Abdelrazzak Rajjam, Mohamed el Saeed, and Saeed Makhloufi, and, in their pledge of loyalty, they called for the merger of the FIS with the GIA, but the FIS leadership has not taken a stand regarding them. In fact, it was Anouar Haddam who called for the absorption of the FIS into the GIA and was expelled from the FIS Executive Committee abroad but still acts as FIS spokesman. What is the truth about relations with the GIA? What is the position of those who swore allegiance to the amir of the GIA in the FIS institutions? Does Anouar Haddam's repeated and public support for the GIA reflect the position of FIS leaders? And if not, would that not undermine his credibility as FIS official spokesman?

[Qammazi] All those you mentioned in your question are our brothers and colleagues in the FIS including those in the GIA, most if not all of whom, from leaders to grass roots, are FIS officials, cadres, elected members, and strugglers. After the FIS was hit and scattered, it was God's will that some of us ended up in prison while others engaged in secret action, jihad, or work in exile. Some were killed and we beseech God to grant them martyrdom. All brothers are bound by the rights of Islamic fraternity in accordance with the teachings of the prophet, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, who said: "Muslims are equal. They unite against others who are out to harm them." What you said in your question is an internal organizational matter and has to do with the nature of the work and circumstances. What is certain is that the matter is not as magnified by the media. There are no fundamental differences between us. It is just a matter of opinion for everyone of us as to what is in the general interest, what is incomplete, and what is good for the nation. We are sure that a meeting of all these leaderships at home and abroad, the free and the imprisoned and those in detention from the jihad wing and the political wing, would eliminate all confusion and ambiguity.

[Al-Darwish] It has been claimed that contacts with the authorities have not been severed. What is the level of the current contacts and could they, in their present state, lead to a new round of dialogue with the authorities?

[Qammazi] The authorities' contacts, though not severed, have not reached an effective level that could bear fruit and produce tangible results. They are always affected by events and changes in the arena and by the power struggle within the regime. As far as we are concerned, the contacts, if continued at this rate, would not go far because we cannot take any effective step in the absence of our brothers from the leadership and cadres of FIS who are in prison, who operate in secret, who are in exile, who are in concentration camps, and others. The regime hit and dissolved the FIS and now wants individuals in it to take stands and make binding commitments. We have repeatedly stated and emphasized, especially in the 6 September 1994 message signed by the five FIS shaykhs in the Blida prison and addressed to the presidency, the parties, and the media, that we are a part of the leadership not all of it and that the question of drawing up terms for a solution and grounds for negotiations with the illegitimate authorities cannot be fulfilled unless we are all completely free and able to meet with all the confirmed FIS leaderships, including both its armed jihad and political wings at home and abroad, as well as the the leaderships who are in prison or in concentration camps. Once the entire leadership meets, we would try to achieve a just solution based on God's Shari'ah to root out the crisis completely.

That is why we are waiting for the authorities to release FIS leaders and members who would then participate in the consultations for holding such a meeting and come up with an official stand that would be binding on everyone.

[Al-Darwish] The Rome agreement did not say which elections should come first, the presidential or legislative elections. Do you believe that holding presidential elections first would be a step toward a solution?

[Qammazi] The FIS cannot decide the type of elections before all the confirmed leaderships of the political and jihad wings at home and abroad can meet. That is why the FIS representative at the Rome meeting had no power to specify or approve the type of elections. As regards the elections announced unilaterally by the regime without consultation or agreement with the parties to the conflict who have legitimacy on their side, they denote that the regime is still engaged in its old deceptions. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] To go back to the Rome agreement, many believe that the FIS is the first beneficiary and winner from that agreement because it got a number of important concessions from the other parties. Do you think that the FIS itself made concessions, and if so, what are they?

[Qammazi] In our view, it is not a question of concessions. The problem is not between us and the parties. We have nothing to concede. What appeared in the general framework [of the agreement], although not completely representing the independent position of the FIS, can be considered positive as a joint action with the influential parties.

[Al-Darwish] What is the state of health of Shaykh Madani and Shaykh Belhadj?

[Qammazi] They are well, thank God, but the circumstances of their [house arrest] conditions have not changed from the first day of their transfer, although somewhat different from prison. But legally they are still prisoners, watched and required to complete their 12-year prison sentence. [passage omitted]

Armed Islamic Groups Issue Threats, Denunciation

Journalists Told To Stop Work

NC2201092595 Paris AFP in English 0817 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Jan 22 (AFP)—Algeria's hardline fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group (GIA) threatened to execute Algerian radio and television journalists unless they stopped work immediately, the group said in a statement published on Sunday.

"The Islamic Armed Group ... calls on all radio and television journalists to stop work after this statement otherwise the al- Jama'ah (GIA) will strike with might anyone refusing to comply immediately," it said in a statement published by the London-based Arabic newspaper Al-Hayat.

Signed by GIA leader Abou Abderrahmane Amine, the statement ended: "We fight with swords those who fight us with words," according to Al-Hayat which is published simultaneously in several Arab capitals.

The GIA, the most radical of the fundamentalist movements fighting in Algeria, accused the journalists of treachery for failing to uphold their cause, which is to set up an Islamic-run government.

The threat came one day after suspected Islamic militants shot dead the president of Algeria's football federation, Rashid Haraigue, in central Algiers.

At least 20,000 people—including dozens of journalists—are estimated to have been killed in the Algerian conflict, which has escalated into virtual civil war since the government canceled legislative elections in 1992 that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was set to win.

Paris-Algiers Transport 'Banned'

LD2101145695 Paris LCI Television in French 1400 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The two main armed Islamic groups in Algeria today denounced the peace offer made by the Islamic Salvation Front, the banned FIS, and part of the opposition to the regime. [passage omitted]

GIA, the Armed Islamic group, the most radical of the armed groups, has also made new threats against France today, banning all means of transport between Paris and Algiers. The GIA said it is distancing itself from the Rome platform, signed 13 January, despite the fact that a communique attributed to the GIA said the movement is ready to stop the war.

Rome Accord Repudiated

LD2101151795 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Army [Armee Islamique du Salut, AIS], considered the armed wing of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], has denounced the agreement signed by the main Algerian opposition parties—one of which was the FIS itself—in Rome last week. The Armed Islamic Group [Groupe Islamique Arme, GIA], considered to be the most extreme of these armed Islamist factions, after having initially accepted the agreement, has also just rejected it. Our reporter is Jerome Bastion:

[Bastion] Yes, in their position statements, the two main armed groups seemingly reject in its entirety the platform adopted in Rome—seemingly, since an earlier GIA communique of a few days ago, whose authorship was unidentified, fell in line with the conclusions reached at the Sant'Egidio meeting. That text confirmed the sense of certainty demonstrated by the Algerian opposition leaders who signed the agreement that the FIS is in a position to make the armed Islamist factions see reason. But today, in two separate announcements, the GIA—the most radical group—and the AIS, the military wing of the FIS, rejected the Rome agreement wholesale. The former, the GIA, stresses its objective to establish a caliphate through armed struggle, pointing out that jihad, holy war, and civil war should not be confused with one another. The GIA also repeats its threats to foreigners—notably French nationals—who go to Algeria, and threatens Algerians who travel to France as well.

The AIS, for its part, challenges the condemnation of violence made by those who took part in the Rome meeting, but says it is not categorically rejecting a political solution approved by the FIS leadership; however, any such solution would have to be reached in accord with the mujahidin, that is to say, the armed fighters. The AIS statement is thus more measured. Another faction, the Higher Council of the Armed Islamic Forces [Le Conseil Superieur des Forces Armees Islamiques], supposedly representing soldiers who have deserted from the Algerian army, has taken a position in favor of the Rome platform. All of this serves to emphasize the fact that the Islamist current, or its armed factions at least, remains highly divided, and that any return to peace is still a remote prospect in view of the jockeying for position implicit in today's statements.

Football Federation Chairman Assassinated

LD2101130195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The security services have announced that Algerian Football Federation Chairman Rachid Haraigue was assassinated this morning by armed terrorists outside his home on Krim Belkacem Road in central Algiers.

The statement of the security services indicated that the attack against Mr. Haraigue was carried out when he was inside his car at around 0750 hours.

Haraigue is the second senior sports official to be murdered in the past four months following the killing of Bordj-Menaiel Football Federation Chairman 'Ali Tahanouti, who was murdered outside his home in Bourdj-Menaiel last October. [passage omitted]

French Trader Murdered in Algiers

LD2201192195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The security services issued a statement today saying that the El-Arz hotel in (Telegilaf) municipality of Boghni, Tizi Ouzou Province, was set on fire at 2100 on Friday, the day before yesterday. The statement said the fire caused serious material damage, and pointed out that the terrorists critically wounded the hotel manager.

The security services' statement said that Joseph Jose Charles Belaiche, a French trader, was killed at Port Said park in Algiers by armed terrorists. The statement said the victim was 65 [as heard] years old. The statement added that a 35-year-old woman was critically wounded in the operation.

Another statement by the security services said three customs officers were killed this morning by an armed group at Tidjelabine, Boumerdes Province.

Security Forces Kill 20 'Terrorists'

LD2101191395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued by security services today said that security forces have eliminated 20 terrorists in Algiers, Skikda, and Jijel between Wednesday [18 January] and Saturday. Security forces recovered a quantity of arms during those operations.

Egypt

Pelletreau Visit Deals With Ties, Peace Process

Musa, Pelletreau Discuss Nonproliferation

NC2101215995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2146 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that during a meeting he held with Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, this evening, he briefed him on Egypt's position on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. Musa announced that what is required is to establish security and stability in the region based on the premise that security here should mean the security of all the region's countries who must participate in the process on an equal footing with regard to obligations and rights.

Musa added that the United States is interested in the NPT and must communicate this interest to all countries. He affirmed that the Egyptian position will not change unless the Israeli position also changes.

Musa explained that he agreed with Pelletreau to continue consultations between the two countries over the next several months. He pointed out that Egypt has been notified of no new Israeli stance on the treaty.

Mubarak Receives Pelletreau

NC2301072295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0710 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Near-East affairs, at the presidential office in Heliopolis this morning.

U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Edward Walker attended the meeting.

Relations 'More Than Excellent'

NC2301083895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0818 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Jan (MENA)—Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Near East affairs, has praised Egyptian-U.S. relations and described them as strong and more than excellent.

He said in a statement after meeting President Husni Mubarak that the meeting was excellent. He pointed out that he conveyed to President Mubarak greetings from U.S. President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, who is looking forward to visiting Cairo at the beginning of spring.

He said: We told President Mubarak that we are committed to strengthening relations between Egypt and the United States and that the two countries need to work together to establish a just, comprehensive, and complete peace in the Middle East region.

Mubarak on Nonproliferation, Ties With U.S.

NC2301081895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0727 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has announced that Egypt will not submit to pressure under any circumstances and will allow no one to wound its pride.

The president asserted that he will not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty unless Israel signs it or "we reach an equation that will assure us in advance that Israel will sign. This is a principle that we cannot relax or abandon."

In remarks to the weekly newspaper MAYU published today, President Mubarak described Egyptian-U.S. relations as normal ['adiyah].

Commenting on his brief visit to Jordan two days ago, the president noted that he and King Husayn discussed every aspect of the peace issue, including the negotiations on the Syrian track.

President Mubarak told MAYU that during his recent brief visit to France, he reviewed Middle East developments with President Francois Mitterrand, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and ways of turning the region into an area free of weapons of mass destruction.

Referring to the border dispute between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, he said he hopes a fruitful, positive, and mutually satisfactory solution to the problem will be reached.

Asked about the prospect of a government reshuffle before the upcoming People's Assembly and Consultative Council elections, President Mubarak said there will be no such reshuffle and explained that it is important to maintain government stability for the sake of economic development.

He said the National Democratic Party will choose the best possible candidates for the upcoming elections, which will be contested by individual candidates in every constituency. He noted that this election method is both popular with the public and fair.

Reportage on Mubarak-Husayn Meeting in Jordan

Meeting 'a Step of Great Importance'

NC2101111695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Jan (MENA)—Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has affirmed that President Husni Mubarak's visit to Jordan today is especially important because it is the first since the Gulf crisis in 1990.

The information minister clarified in remarks he made today that the visit was arranged during Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim Kabariti's visit to Egypt recently. He conveyed the invitation to President Mubarak from Jordanian monarch King Husayn to visit Amman.

He said that the meeting between President Mubarak and King Husayn is a step of great importance toward improving Arab relations and attempting to reach joint understanding of Arab and regional issues, foremost of which are attempts to bolster the march of a comprehensive and full peace in the region, alongside bilateral relations between the two countries.

Paper: Meeting Follows Alexandria Strategy

NC2201130095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1035 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I newspaper emphasizes that the al-'Aqabah summit between President Husni Mubarak and Jordan's King Husayn asserts Egypt's firm and sound policy on maintaining the initiative toward the desired goal of achieving reconciliation and restoring Arab solidarity. The paper adds that this represents the continuation of the clear strategy that began with the tripartite Alexandria summit between Mubarak, Fahd, and al-Asad. The paper notes that this summit was followed by joint Egyptian-Syrian efforts under the auspices of Mubarak and al-Asad to end the border crisis between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

In an article written by Chief Editor Mursi 'Atallah today, the paper says one of the reasons for Arab and world interest in the al- 'Aqabah summit is that it came as a direct response to those who imagined through their past illusions and erroneous calculations that the Alexandria summit formed a new alliance in the Arab world. But developments have revealed that these premature conclusions were untrue and inaccurate.

The paper adds that the world and Arab interest in the Mubarak- Husayn summit was also prompted by the fact that President Mubarak's visit to al-'Aqabah yesterday is his first to Jordan since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Therefore, the paper notes, most observers considered it the first serious and public attempt to stem the ramifications and negative effects caused by the second Gulf war in the form of inter-Arab differences.

The paper says one of the causes of this interest is the objective look at the timing of the visit while the peace process suffers direct and indirect challenges. This situation, it adds, requires the unification of the Arab fold to enhance the ability to negotiate on all tracks. The aim is to secure legitimate Arab rights by asserting support for the peace process and responding to its mechanism as long as international legitimacy resolutions remain the ultimate reference and decisive criterion.

Talks Said a Clear Concept of Action

NC2201155495 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Sa'id Fa'iq: "The Al-'Aqabah Summit and Egyptian Summit Diplomacy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The brief visit that President Husni Mubarak paid at noon yesterday to the Jordanian city of al-'Aqabah, where he met with King Husayn of Jordan, was a lightning visit aimed at serving the Arab nation. The importance of the visit cannot be measured by the number of hours it lasted. From a practical perspective, the al-'Aqabah summit assumes extreme importance in view of its timing and the circumstances under which it was held. It is a clear and candid translation of Cairo's concept of effective Arab action to achieve the required coordination in response to the challenges facing the Arab nation at this stage.

This visit, which was described by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif as an important step toward promoting Arab relations and arriving at a common Arab understanding of Arab issues, represents from Egypt's viewpoint the best means of achieving the cherished goals. The visit is within the framework of summit diplomacy, which Egypt believes to be the best means of promoting effective political action, especially at this delicate stage of Arab action which requires sincere efforts to achieve Arab reconciliation and to clear the air. This will all serve the pan-Arab objectives and interests.

After the summit, President Mubarak broached the topic of the hour—Arab reconciliation—pointing out that it is only natural that differences occasionally arise between brothers, but concerted efforts are needed to settle these differences. He noted that the Alexandria summit was intended to serve the cause of peace and to bring about Arab reconciliation and bolster joint Arab action.

We maintain that inasmuch as the Alexandria summit was a step toward fulfilling the Arab hopes for reconciliation and progress toward peace, the al-'Aqabah summit was intended to complete the process with another step in the same direction and to fulfill, as King Husayn said, the hopes of everyone that common stances will be formed to enhance the standing of the Arab nation and achieve a promising future for the coming generations.

The al-'Aqabah summit was the natural response to the events taking place in the region, particularly the central Arab issues headed by the Palestinian issue and the process of a comprehensive and fair peace in the region. Since the Israeli policy is betting on Arab difference and on deepening the impact of marginal contradictions and problems in order to stall, dilute the crucial issues and drain them of their real substance, the Arab leaders must pause and ponder the current Arab situation. They must realize the importance of Arab cohesion, work out a new phase of Arab relations, and correct the course of action so as to promote pan-Arab interests and fulfill the Arab people's aspirations.

The summit meetings are intended to serve the Arab nation. Since the tone of the Israeli political statements has changed recently and have seemed to return to the previous era in terms of intransigence and threats, reaching the point of hinting at war, there is a dire need for unified Arab action based on enlightened moves capable of adapting in order to safeguard the Arab rights and achieve a fair and comprehensive peace. Within the framework of this concept, the summit meetings constitute a call for closing ranks and clearing the air in order to emerge with a unified Arab stand to deal with crucial issues.

Syrian Foreign Minister Meets With Mubarak

JN2001210095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in Cairo today. The foreign minister conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad dealing with the region's developments and the latest developments of the peace process. Talks dealt with bilateral relations and issues of common concern.

The meeting was attended by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Syrian Ambassador in Cairo 'Isa Darwish.

Al-Shar' arrived in Cairo earlier today bearing a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. Al-Shar' was received at the airport by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Syrian Ambassador 'Isa Darwish, the chief of protocol, senior Egyptian Foreign Ministry official, and a number of the Syrian embassy staff.

Answering reporters' questions at the Cairo International Airport, al-Shar' said: I bear a message from President Hafiz al- Asad to Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak dealing with the Arab situation and bilateral relations. Al-Shar' added: I will have the opportunity to discuss with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa everything of concern to the two fraternal countries.

On the latest Israeli statements, the foreign minister said that Israel bears a big responsibility for hindering the peace process and in avoiding the realization of a just and comprehensive peace in the region, and that all the tensions we see now are the result of this intransigent Israeli stand.

Asked what Egypt can possibly do at this stage, al-Shar' said: Egypt is an important sister state. Syrian-Egyptian coordination is strong and continuous. We consult and exchange views at the highest level between the two countries to iron out Arab conditions and do whatever we can to restore the required vitality to Arab solidarity.

On whether there a summit can be expected between Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak, al-Shar' said: Meetings between al-Asad and Mubarak are a permanent possibility; it is possible for them to meet at any time.

Al-Baz, Israel's Beilin Comment on Talks

NC2201181095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al- Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's office for political affairs, has described his talks with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin today as useful. He noted that the talks dealt with all issues relating to the peace process and the need to enhance the efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace on all tracks. In a statement after the talks, he said that the talks dealt with the differences that have arisen recently, particularly the media treatment of these differences, including the document leaked from the Israeli Foreign Ministry proposing sanctions against Egypt. He said that Beilin pointed out that this document does not represent any Israeli policy and certainly does not express the Israeli Foreign Ministry's view. Al-Baz stressed the importance of strengthening the search for a comprehensive and permanent peace to achieve our strategic interests, noting that this is a basic point on which we agree and which must not be underestimated.

Al-Baz pointed out that Beilin stressed that the Israeli Government absolutely does not think of stirring up any other country's antagonism for Egypt or of sowing differences between Egypt and one country or another or with the Jewish communities or lobbies. On the contrary, he said, Israel considers Egypt to be the cornerstone of efforts for peace, security, and stability in the region. Al-Baz added: We also discussed other issues and we are trying honestly and objectively to pinpoint the points of agreement and disagreement, considering that the two countries do not want strained relations or an atmosphere of tension in the region. The Arab-Israeli goal at present is to reduce the hotbeds of tension and the possibility of escalating violence.

Beilin stated that during his talks with Dr. al-Baz they discussed the issue of nuclear arms and exchanged views on this issue. He noted that there is a common understanding now that eventually nuclear arms will be frozen in the Middle East, but the question now is the timing. He pointed out that there are differences in views between Egypt and Israel in this respect, but the right path can be found for a mutual understanding. He stressed that it is impossible for the relations between the two countries to become strained to the point of crisis because of this or any other issue.

Asked if there is a proposal that Israel promise to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] after peace has been established, Beilin said: We believe that the whole process of halting nuclear arms will come in a second stage, after peace has been established among all parties in the Middle East.

Asked if it is possible to discuss the two subjects—peace and nuclear disarmament—together, the Israeli deputy foreign minister said: What happened in Israel over the past few years was a revolution. We lived for years with the majority of us not believing that peace talks could be conducted with the PLO, that peace could be reached with Jordan, or that negotiations over the Golan Heights could be held with Syria.

He said it would be wrong to apply pressure on the Israeli Government, which is negotiating with the Arab sides and which is facing strong opposition.

He said negotiations over peace and disarmament at the same time would result in major pressure on the Israeli Government, and would boost the positions of the opponents of peace in Israel.

Asked how Israel can discuss peace while the Israeli prime minister talks about war, Beilin said Rabin had explained that if there is no peace in the Middle East, there will be a possibility of war. He said Rabin wanted to convince his listeners of the importance of peace. He added: Regrettably, this statement has been taken out of context. Men who have long fought for peace will be surprised at the talk of war. Beilin reiterated that the quote was taken out of context.

Asked about a leaked Israeli Foreign Ministry document containing "proposals to punish Egypt", Beilin said: We have to look at the date of this document. It is merely a paper, like other papers prepared by Foreign Ministry departments to discuss all options and offer various proposals to decision makers.

He added: There are many documents like this one, but the mistake was in its being "leaked."

He went on to say that Israel will work hard to prevent the leakage of such documents. But he stressed that Israel's policy is to speed up the normalization of its relations with Egypt and to constantly improve these relations politically and economically.

Beilin added: We believe that Egypt is the most important foundation for peace in the Middle East. We realize the anger of the Egyptian man in the street over this document and how difficult it is to dispel the impression resulting from its leakage. But I am telling the truth, and I hope you will believe it.

Asked if the status of Jerusalem was discussed in his talks with Dr. al-Baz, the Israeli deputy foreign minister said that the status of Jerusalem is one of the issues that will be discussed in the talks on a final solution. He said Israel will be satisfied with whatever is reached at the negotiations.

On Israel's violation of the Declaration of Principles with the Palestinians and the establishment of new settlements in Jerusalem, Beilin said: We did not sign any agreement with the Palestinians on building or not building in Jerusalem, but it is the policy of the Israeli Government not to build new settlements. We differentiate between Jerusalem and the West Bank, and we are building settlements in Jerusalem because it was annexed in 1967; there are differences between Israel and Egypt in this respect.

Asked what Israel's reaction would be if Egypt decided to build a nuclear plant for peaceful purposes, Beilin said that this subject was not discussed. I do not think that Israel has any specific reaction, he said.

Dr. Usamah al-Baz commented on this saying: "This is an Egyptian affair, not an Israeli one."

People's Assembly Rejects Knesset Delegation Visit

NC2301120995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1116 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Jan (MENA)—The People's Assembly refuses to play host to an Israeli Knesset delegation at the present time.

Last week Israeli Ambassador David Sultan met with some Israeli officials and mentioned the idea of a visit by an Israeli Knesset delegation to Cairo, whose members would meet with Egyptian Speaker Dr. Fathi Surur to try to end the current tension between the two countries.

In an exclusive statement to the weekly newspaper AL-'ARABI, mouthpiece of the opposition Nasirite Arab Democratic Party, Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah, chairman of the People's Assembly Foreign Relations Committee, said that the Assembly's position on dealing with the Israeli Knesset has remained unchanged since the latter passed resolutions annexing the Golan Heights and criminalizing any dealings with the PLO.

Dr. 'Abdallah affirmed that no contacts have been made with the Knesset although the latter, after it decriminalized contacts with the PLO, tried several times to initiate contacts with the Egyptian People's Assembly.

Bosnian President Begins Visit for 'Few Days'

NC2001213695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2105 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic arrived here this evening on a visit to Egypt which will last for a few days. During the visit, the Bosnian president will take part in a conference on Islam and Arab culture in the new world, which will open tomorrow and last for two days. Al-Azhar will organize a ceremony tomorrow during which the Bosnian president will be given the King Faysal prize.

Islamic Reformer Defies Assassination Danger

NC2001181995 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 16 Jan 95 pp 10, 11

[Report by Nadya Abu-al-Majd]

[FBIS Translated Text] Before over 50 foreign journalists Sa'id al-'Ashmawi said he will not stop reforming Islamic religious thought even though he is the next target for assassination. At a meeting with the Foreign Correspondents Club on Wednesday [11 January], he said: I am not secular but a good Muslim. Nonetheless, they are shedding my blood on the pages of the newspaper AL-SHA'B.

Counselor al-'Ashmawi said he is the next target of terrorism, which is backed by a tripartite alliance among al-Azhar, Saudi Arabia, and the Muslim Brotherhood [MB]. "They are trying to eliminate the writers."

After Al-'Ashmawi finished his speech, AL-SHA'B Chief editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn stood up, saying: I will speak. As you see, I do not carry a gun. Al-'Ashmawi answered: Even if you carry a gun, I do not care.

Al-'Ashmawi said he will not falter in his work and goals because "Islamic reform is in the interest of Islam, Egypt, humanity, civilization, and the world, "and that if he is assassinated, this will be "the price of my mission and I accept my destiny."

Apparently referring to the articles published in AL-SHA'B under the title "al-'Ashmawi's school of thought," accusing him of being against the spirit of religion, al-'Ashmawi said his cultural plan consists of five points:

1. Key terms that are frequently used must be interpreted in a scientific way, because the Islamic mind is confused and the scholars do not understand the meaning of the terms they use. I have known the shari'ah according to its scientific interpretation. I have also discovered that the term Islamic shari'ah is used wrongly in nine out of 10 cases and that al-fiqh [jurisprudence] is man-made and not God-made.

2. The Koranic verses must be explained and interpreted against their historical background and not literally as scholars and extremists do. This is a mistake which distorts Islam. We cannot reform Islamic thinking and present its bright image without this.

All the verses in the Koran about atheists and the wars between Muslims and non-Muslims descended for a specific reason and in a specific historical context. However, the current of political Islam is against interpreting the Koran in accordance with its historical context.

3. I emphasize that the real meaning of jihad in Islam is not holy war but that a person should purify himself, his conscience, and his personality. In warfare, jihad is only for self-defense and anything else is considered aggression rejected by the letter and spirit of Islam.

4. Politics and religion must be separate. This does not mean that I would separate religion and state because each state in the world adopts the religion of the majority. There is Christianity in America and Europe, Judaism in Israel, and Islam in the Islamic world states. In Egypt there is the Islamic religion and a rich religious and historical heritage.

I differentiate between religion and politics. If politics mixes with religion, it becomes an ideology or a rigid doctrine. Political action is a human action, be it by the government or the opposition. Mixing politics and religion means we will transform into a holy war the struggle between the government, which is based on religion, and the opposition, which uses religion as an expedient.

5. I believe that Muslims should not treat non-Muslims as atheists. I base this on verse 62 of the Sura al-Baqarah, which says: "Those who believe (in the Koran), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians—Any who believe in God, and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord: On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." [Koranic verse]. This verse is explained further in verse 69 of Sura of al-Ma'idah.

Counselor al-'Ashmawi said: Regrettably, we have been living in the shadow of terrorism for a long time. The extremists are trying to exploit social and economic factors. However, this is not the only reason for terrorism. There is a network at home and abroad that is feeding terrorism.

At home, there are al-Azhar, the MB, and the newspaper AL-SHA'B. Al-Azhar is confiscating books and ideas. In 1987, al-Azhar and the MB launched a campaign against me because of my book "Political Islam." The al-Azhar shaykh published a letter in AL-AHRAM full of insults to me. This letter should have been published by a shaykh.

During the book fair in 1992 al-Azhar confiscated five books of mine without giving any reasons, although my belief as a judge is that al-Azhar has no authority to confiscate books or anything else. These books were released only after the personal intervention of President Mubarak. Moreover, the al-Azhar shaykh has not yet answered my request to hold a public debate with him.

As for the MB, all the armed groups have emerged from under their cloaks and raise their slogans. Charitable project funds sent to them by Saudi Arabia are used to finance the terrorists. Neither Saudi Arabia nor the MB have denied this.

Counselor al-'Ashmawi attacked the newspaper AL-SHA'B for publishing MB ideas. He said: It has begun publishing a series of articles against me written by a former communist writer. (He means Dr. Muhammad 'Amarah). They are provocative articles designed to stir up the public against me and to shed my blood, as is happening in Algeria. The scenario has become very clear. A mere hint against a writer or an intellectual and he becomes an apostate. There is no need for facts or for details on how to kill him. An example is that young man who stabbed Najib Mahfuz. There is brain washing of the youth. The views of these writers are a reason for a fatwa against them. The goal is to eliminate writers one after the other. Faraj Fudah was assassinated. There was an assassination attempt against Najib Mahfuz. I know and expect I will be the next target.

On the pages of AL-SHA'B they are sanctioning the spilling of my blood and are asserting that I deny the holiness of the Koran. This is a sufficient accusation to issue a death sentence against me. Saudi magazines are repeating the same talk. But I have entered the battle and announced my reply in an interview with ROSE AL-YUSUF, a magazine open to all liberals, which plays an important and basic role in reforming society and enlightening the public.

Abroad, Saudi Arabia has lost its posture and joined the fray. As I stated, they are attacking me in their newspapers and magazines. They are trying in various ways to re-confiscate my books, especially my book on Islamic caliphate. They are trying to make another Salman Rushdie out of me. Saudi Arabia is trying to play the same role Iran played against Salman Rushdie so that I will be a victim of this and they will appear to be defending Islam. But I am not Salman Rushdie. I am not against Islam. I am an Islamist reformer. If we do not reform Islam, we will be finished now that people everywhere have turned against Islam and Muslims. Saudi Arabia's attack on me proves that ideas can shake thrones.

As for Sudan, it toes Iran's line. Al-Turabi is behaving as if he were the new ayatollah. Iran is trying to encircle Egypt with Algeria from the west and Sudan from the south.

Al-'Ashmawi said that Western media focuses on extremist political Islam and not on enlightened Islam, which I represent. He added that U.S. intelligence has adopted the method which British and French intelligence adopted in the 1920's to strike at national liberation movements with religion. For example, the United States gave 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman a green card [permanent residence permit] so that he would help them get rid of the Soviets in Afghanistan. But the United States later discovered that he was plotting against them and has put him on trial.

Majdi Husayn did not like this talk. He entered into a sharp argument with counselor al-'Ashmawi, who stressed that there is "a very dangerous current of terrorism." Majid Husayn said: al- 'Ashmawi can say and write what he wants but he does not want anyone to argue with him. If somebody tries to argue with him, he shouts "they are killing me."

Majdi Husayn claimed that al-'Ashmawi is trying to create an international uproar around him and is saying that there is an international conspiracy against him. Majdi Husayn tried to turn the discussion in another direction by asking al-'Ashmawi to unequivocally denounce the arrest of Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn. Al-'Ashmawi answered, "Majdi Husayn is trying to turn this news conference into his own news conference." The audience exploded with laughter.

'Al-'Ashmawi said: I am known as a liberal judge. Political Islam is trying to abolish the law and the rule of the law from its newspapers. I am not happy with what has happened to 'Adil Husayn. I regret that Majdi

Husayn has tried to put words in my mouth. Ideas must not be criminalized. However, we must wait until the investigation is over before I can comment, or else the country will be ruled from the street.

He added: I am not trying to create a world crisis. The Islamic problem is not local or regional but international. I am not speaking about a personal problem but given a sample of the actions and intentions of the extremists and terrorists.

Al-'Ashmawi said: The traditional formula of Islamic thinking has utterly failed and reached a dead end. It has failed to stop terrorism. This formula has failed to develop society and to present the correct image of Islam. All wise men are unanimous on the need to rejuvenate religious thinking. Some have done positive work in this regard. I have also done my share.

Asked whether he receives support from the Egyptian state, al- 'Ashmawi said: The state does not support me but it knows that I have been targeted for years. So it has assigned three guards to protect me from terrorism.

Asked to explain his statement that the Algerian scenario will be applied in Egypt, al-'Ashmawi said: Regrettably, although Egypt is an old state with an ancient civilization, the current scenario in Algeria is coming to Egypt. It will destabilize the government, which is not properly dealing with this problem, because it is still dealing with it as a solely criminal problem.

Although the president and some ministers have stated that this problem cannot be dealt with by police measures alone and that there should be new ideas, such as a liberal current within Islam, regrettably, we have been living in the shadow of terrorism for a long time.

On the role played by Muslim liberals in confronting and fighting terrorism and extremism, he said: There are many Muslim liberals. I started in 1979 and many joined me later on. I travel around the world to spread this message. I meet with journalists, hold television interviews, and use all opportunities available to me.

The terrorists are spreading a bad image of Islam. The extremists are also spreading this bad image, ignoring the ideas presented by the liberals.

It is a world problem which I predicted in 1979. In my book "Political Islam" issued in 1986, I urged that the Islamists water down their hostile language. My predictions have proved to be true.

The liberals are doing their best but there is no protection for them. We must be supported by the government and by the people who have been brainwashed for 25 years by the media, which has been infiltrated by extremists who do not allow us to appear on television.

Coptic Pope Rejects Jerusalem Travel

NC2201121095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—Pope Shanudah III, pope of Alexandria and patriarch of the Coptic community, has affirmed that Israel's threats to wage war and the absence of firm stances on the peace process makes the Egyptian church even more determined in its stance to reject the travel of Egyptian Copts to the holy places in Jerusalem.

Pope Shanudah said in a statement to AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I newspaper today that his rejection of the travel of Egyptian Copts to Jerusalem is, first and foremost, a political stance that cannot change so long as full peace between the Arab countries and Israel is not realized.

He added that the steps Israel has taken cannot be considered peace in the full sense of the word; they are merely attempts at peace. He pointed out that Israel depends on political support from the U.S. side, which uses the veto a great deal to save Israel from any international sanctions.

Regarding the problem of Dayr al-Sultan in the occupied territories, Pope Shanudah said Israel gave the monastery to the Ethiopians for political reasons, namely the issue of bringing the Falasha Jews to Israel. Israel was hoping for facilities from Ethiopia to use the Red Sea, despite the fact that the current Ethiopian state has no ports on the Red Sea as a result of the independence of Eritrea. However, the Israeli stance still refuses to grant Egypt its rights over Dayr al-Sultan, which all historic evidence shows belongs to Egypt, including the Israeli Supreme Court's verdict in 1971 in favor of Egypt's right over the monastery.

Sudan Asked To Compensate for Confiscations

NC2201102795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0941 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—Egypt has asked the Sudanese Government to pay approximately $3 billion (figure as received] as compensation for the Egyptian buildings, property, and installations confiscated last year as soon as possible.

The ROSE AL-YUSUF weekly says in its Monday edition that Egypt last week handed the Sudanese Government a lengthy memorandum compiled by Egyptian ministries including a list of the buildings, property, and installations that a special committee inventoried and priced.

Counterterrorism Operations Reported

Security Raids Successful

NC2001171095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1534 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—State Security detection agencies have dealt a new blow to the remnants of the terrorist fugitives. Last night six active terrorists were arrested, four others were killed, and two were wounded while trying to escape in Markaz Mallawi and Markaz Bani Mazar in al-Minya Governorate in Upper Egypt.

Seven other terrorists surrendered to the security forces and gave important information that will help to uncover the hideouts of fugitive terrorist leaders.

Citizens in various areas of al-Minya seized five terrorists who were carrying weapons and ammunition and handed them over to the authorities.

This news was reported by an Interior Ministry security source today. He added that the security forces arrested 26 other individuals suspected of having links with the terrorists.

The security source said that State Security detectives monitored the movements of terrorists who participated in recent attacks. He explained that after the necessary legal measures were completed, antiterrorist squads belonging to State Security detection agencies set off from one of their secret headquarters in Upper Egypt and, assisted by special units from the Central Security Forces, raided several terrorist hideouts simultaneously.

In al-'Idwah the raids netted six leading terrorists who were found in possession of firearms, ammunition, explosive devices, and important documents that included plans to attack various targets.

The security source said that during a raid on another hideout in the al-Basqalun area the security forces exchanged fire with several fugitive terrorists who escaped from villages in the Mallawi and Bani Mazar Districts.

During the exchange of gunfire Sha'ban Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Ati, a leading terrorist wanted in connection with several cases; 'Abd-al- Basit 'Id Muhammad Ahmad, also wanted in several terrorist cases; 'Abd-al-Hakim Siddiq, also on the wanted list and a friend of a prominent terrorist leader in the village of al-Mahras in Mallawi District; and an unidentified person were killed.

The security source said that when their hideout was searched, five pistols, a quantity of ammunition, five explosive devices each rigged with 1 kg of TNT, and plenty of documents comprising the ideological writings of terrorists and plans were found.

The source added that a fugitive terrorist leader was found during a raid on a hideout in al-'Umdah Street in Bani Mazar. In his attempt to flee he was hit by a bullet. A pistol and two explosive devices were found on him. One of the devices was equipped with a timer, a dry-cell battery, and electric cords.

The security source said that auxiliary policemen, assisted by citizens, seized a leading al-Minya terrorist who had a pistol and several bullets in his possession. He was hurt as he tried to escape.

The Interior Ministry source said that seven terrorists turned themselves in and gave important information to the authorities that will be useful in finding the hideouts of other fugitive terrorists.

Twenty-six other people suspected of having links with the terrorists were taken into custody. They are being interrogated about their connection with recent terrorist incidents in al-Minya.

The security official reported that the citizens of several villages and towns in al-Minya Governorate seized five terrorists who had some weapons and ammunition with them and handed them over to the police.

The official praised the citizens for helping the security forces, noting that citizens know about the terrorist scheme that is affecting their lives and threatening their safety and their families' wellbeing.

He noted that citizens are providing the security forces with useful information that will assist them in arresting the fugitive culprits who participated in recent terrorist attacks.

2 'Terrorists' Killed

NC2201162595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—Two terrorists were killed today when security forces stormed their hideout in Bani Suwayf Governorate in Upper Egypt. An Interior Ministry source said the confrontation resulted in the death of terrorist Rabi' Muhammad Mustafa, a student at the College of Science, who was wanted in State Security Case No. 687/94. Mustafa was responsible for communicating with and financing terrorist elements in Upper Egypt. He also participated in a number of incidents in al-Minya recently. The confrontation also resulted in the death of a person who carried an identification paper in the name of Ibrahim 'Ali 'Abd-al-Qadir. The security forces are examining his body to determine his true identity.

The security source said two rifles, many rounds of ammunition, $400 in banknotes, and some leaflets were found in the hideout.

First Lieutenant Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hakim Hasan and Lieutenant Mustafa al-Waqar from the Bani Suwayf security force were injured and taken to the hospital.

'Terrorist' Arrested After Firefight

NC2201163995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1605 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Jan (MENA)—An official source in the Ministry of Interior has stated that a number of terrorists opened fire today in the direction of the (Samant) police station of the Abu-Qurqas, Upper Egypt, police force. The force manning the station returned fire.

In a statement today, the source said that the police force succeeded in arresting terrorist Mustafa 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abd-al- Rahman but the other terrorists got away.

The exchange of fire resulted in the martyrdom of Warrant Officer Yusuf Basili Butrus and the wounding of Warrant Officer 'Abd-al- Ghani 'Abd-al-Salam, who was taken to hospital for treatment.

Mauritania

Violent Protests Erupt Over Price Hikes

Riots Enter Second Day

AB2201190595 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 22 Jan 95

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A new tax which has caused bread prices to rise by 25 percent is proving, not surprisingly, to be extremely unpopular in Mauritania. Yesterday, the government of President Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya introduced a new sales tax as part of its structural adjustment program and the resulting hike in bread prices angered the residents of the capital, Noaukchott, so much so that they have taken to the streets in violent protest. From Nouakchott Sheik Bekaye telexed this report:

The riots are going into their second day and the police have not yet got the situation under control. Thousands of youth are involved, many of them students. They have split up into small groups and have set light to many cars and have also attacked bakeries. It is impossible to move around the city freely. The police have been using tear gas against the demonstrators, but have been behaving with restraint in comparison with the tactics they have used during riots in the past.

There are reports that there are civilian casualties as a result of police rough behavior, but I have not been able to confirm this. I did see the police beat one man up, after he was caught throwing stones at them. Although there is much speculation that the opposition UDF [Union of Democratic Forces] is involved in the riots there is no concrete evidence of this.

The government has kept a total silence during two days of disturbances, but President Ould Taya is not the kind of man to back down under public pressure.

Trade Unionist Comments

LD2201224395 Paris Radio France International in French 2130 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] There has been a second day of violent demonstrations in the poor districts of the Mauritanian capital. [passage omitted] Thierry Perret contacted the secretary general of the General Confederation of Mauritanian Workers, an independent trade union. Abdali Ould Mohamed Naha is not at all surprised by these demonstrations, as he explained to Thierry Perret:

[Begin recording] [Ould Mohamed Naha] This did not come as a surprise to us, since in several statements (?made) by our organization through the press, both international and local, we warned the government and the authorities about the way the economic and social situation of the country was being run, and the consequences. We said clearly that social explosions are unpredictable and that they are the accumulation of frustrations, and that we have seen, unfortunately, that the authorities show no interest in consultation.

[Perret] It seems that there has not been any mass social mobilization in recent times in Mauritania. What is the reason for that, do you think?

[Ould Mohamed Naha] We think it is down to two main factors. On the one hand, you have the weakness of organizational structure of our civil society, and on the other the repressive nature and usurpation of basic liberties by the authorities. [end recording]

Rioting Said To Violate Islam, Honor

LD2301120795 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2200 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] If the Mauritanian people, throughout the centuries, have been able to conquer the harshness of nature and build a civilization whose spiritual and cultural radiation embraced the entire area, this is because of their deep belief in God the Almighty and because they have an attachment to their ethical values which are the secret of their strength—values that had become a heritage that is cherished and handed down through the generations. [passage omitted]

It is no secret to anyone that had it not been for our people's strong attachment to the Islamic faith and Islamic values and had it not been for the confidence and mutual respect which were the result of the challenges that faced the Mauritanian people and its leadership our country would not have been able to control the crises and the turning points which had been the feature of the country's history in recent years and the ability of the country to put them behind it successfully.

We all know and we all must not forget that our country was able to win the bet and succeed where other countries had failed although on the surface, those countries were expected to succeed. Why ? It was because the Mauritanian people were determined to adhere to what ensures the continuation of their strength and safeguard their dignity and because they refused to be influenced by the follies of the adventurers and by hatred and division. [passage omitted]

The Mauritanian citizen has been accustomed to discharge what has been entrusted to him rather than to plunder his brother and he was accustomed to ease the pains of his neighbor rather than to harm his security or his property. Our forefathers had taught us how to turn deserts into oases and how to extract water out of rock and how to build roads across the sand and how to conquer nature with courage and patience.

To destroy, to hate or resort to violence are phenomena which are alien to us. We do not wish them on others let alone ourselves. It is because our culture and ethics have taught us that such concepts are not a credit to whoever upholds them let alone those who incite others to commit them.

Accordingly, the least that can be said about what we have today seen in our capital, is that it regrettably contradicts our spiritual and political values. The least that can be said about it is that it is alien to us and to what we know about ourselves. Those who incited the commitment of such practices and those who agreed to stoop to this level must know that this sort of behavior constitutes the strongest attack on the dignity of this nation and its sacred possessions.

Such behavior is totally unacceptable in a society such as ours where religion and a sense of honor prevail against acts of destruction aimed at the security and property of the citizens. This is also totally unacceptable in a modern state which ensures to protect public security and ensure the safety of citizens and their tranquillity.

Those who incited the commission of such acts should know that they have gone too far and the public law and order enforcers will not allow for sanctities to be trampled upon or law and order to be violated or security and stability to be undermined. They also should know that the people are enlightened and prudent enough to distinguish between bad and good and between right and wrong. The people know these people very well. The slogans which they have been boastful raising no longer have any credibility anywhere.

The theories raised by the trouble-mongers had been rejected even by those who yesterday were symbols and representatives of agitation. The states which had been proving grounds for these thoughts and ideologies had gained nothing expect wretchedness, wars and divisions. There is a lesson to be learned from them by this nation and it is a proper reply to those who have been trying to tamper with its values. These people surely must know that the law will be applied most strongly on anyone who will try to harm public order, undermine stability or harm the citizens and their property.

The State will shoulder all its responsibilities so that every citizen can rest assured about his security and that his national dignity is safeguarded because this is a requirement of the nation's supreme interest.

Bahrain

Anti-Riot Police Deployed Against Demonstrators

LD2001215595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] REUTER news agency reports from Bahrain that the situation has again became tense since last night in Manama, and anti-government protesters poured into the streets and demonstrated against the deportation of four of that country's clerics.

According to this report, following the presence of the demonstrators in the streets in the western Manama, capital of Bahrain, hundreds of anti-riot police took positions in the sensitive points and a helicopter belonging to Bahrain's army was flying over Manama.

In its report, REUTER did not refer to any arrests or to any clashes.

At the same time, the U.S. State Department cautioned its citizens in Bahrain to avoid participation in the gatherings and any behavior that might provoke the Bahraini Muslims.

Calm Returns After Clashes

NC2001224495 Paris AFP in English 2120 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Jan 20 (AFP)—Fresh clashes have broken out between demonstrators and police in Bahrain amid a simmering row over the expulsion of several Shiite Moslem clerics, diplomatic sources in the Gulf state said Friday [20 January].

The sources, contacted by telephone from Nicosia, said the clashes after a week-long lull occurred on Thursday northwest of Manama. Calm returned Friday, the sources said.

The opposition Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said several demonstrators were wounded as anti-riot police opened fire with live ammunition and helicopters dropped tear-gas on the crowds.

The protesters fought back with Molotov cocktails and stones, and set fire to tyres, the IFLB said. The clashes took place in several mainly Shiite villages on the road from Manama to al-Budayyi' and in Sitrah, to the east.

"These demonstrations, which sent a clear message to the Bahraini government after the expulsion of the clerics, will carry on until the popular demands are met," it said.

Another opposition group, the Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners in Bahrain, said 25 demonstrators were arrested on Thursday.

The authorities have expelled several clerics, notably Sheikh 'Ali Salman whose arrest in December triggered an unprecedented wave of protests in the Gulf archipelago.

The sheikh was deported to the United Arab Emirates, from where he flew to London and asked for political asylum.

The IFLB says a total of 16 people have been killed in the unrest, but the Bahraini authorities have only acknowledged the death of one policeman. Hundreds of people have been arrested.

The opposition in exile is calling for restoration of the parliament and the constitution suspended by the Sunni-led Bahraini government in 1975.

Opposition Rejects Iran's Role in Recent Events

LD2101191595 Tehran IRNA in English 1637 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Jan. 21, IRNA—A Bahraini opposition leader, Shaykh 'Ali Salman has said mentioning Iran's name in Bahrain's recent events is irrelevant and that such references to Iran were meant to hide the internal nature of the recent events.

In an interview with Lebanese newspaper, ASSAFIR, Shaykh Salman underlined that the aim of implicating Iran in Bahrain's current events is diverting public opinion from the popular protests against suppression of political freedom in Bahrain.

Salman emphasized demonstrators want implemention of 1972 constitution, revival of dissolved parliament of Bahrain since 1975, release of political prisoners and setting up of a committee for reviewing recent causes of the conflict.

Accusing Bahraini authorities of continuing to arrest different strata of people in Bahrain, Salman said the number of detainees has exceeded 2000.

He said these people are facing mental and physical tortures. He added the government by declaring state of emergency arrests a great number of people every day.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Razi, a member of Bahrain Islamic Liberation Front, also said unrest and protests are increasing in Bahrain and a number of people were killed or injured in confrontation with Bahraini Government forces on Friday.

Al-Razi, who was exiled to London fourteen years ago, in a statement that was published in ASSAFIR newspaper Saturday [21 January] said demonstrations are a response to Bahraini Government that by removing clerics from the political scene, they cannot stop people's uprising meant to restore democracy in the country.

He warned Bahraini Government against using suppressive methods for settlement of present crisis. Denying the release of 250 prisioner, al-Razi said the number of released detainees is not more than 100.

Kuwait

Cause of Oil Field Pipeline Explosion Not Known

LD2101174695 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 21 Jan—Sources at the Kuwaiti Oil Company said that investigations are under way to learn the cause of the explosion today in the gas pipeline at the Umm Qadir oil field west of Kuwait in which seven people were injured.

The sources told KUNA: An explosion occurred in the gas pipeline at the Umm Qadir oilfield west of Kuwait.

The sources said that Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Abd al-Muhsin al- Mid'aj had visited the wounded and reassured himself about their condition.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Interior earlier today said that two of the wounded were in serious condition.

The statement said that three Kuwaitis, three Indians, and one Pakistani were wounded and that all of them were taken to a hospital for treatment.

The Interior Ministry statement said that the cause of the explosion is not known. It added that the pipeline that exploded was damaged and that a technical commission of experts has been assigned to find out the cause of the explosion.

Saudi Arabia

Yemeni Speaker Arrives in Riyadh for Visit

LD2201152195 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Excellency Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin- Husayn al-Ahmad al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, arrived in Riyadh earlier today. [passage omitted]

The Yemeni speaker is accompanied by a number of officials at the forefront of whom are 'Abd-al-Qadir Bajammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development; and Deputy Foreign Minister 'Abduh 'Ali 'Abd-al-Rahman.

Meets With Defense Minister

LD2201170995 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1540 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 22 Jan—Prince Sultan Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector-general, received His Excellency Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni National Assembly, and the delegation accompanying him at his palace in al-'Aziziyah this afternoon.

The meeting was attended by the His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, minister for foreign affairs; His Royal Highness Prince Ahmad Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, deputy interior minister; His Excellency 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, minister of education; 'Abd-al-Rahman Mansuri, adviser at the royal court; 'Ali al-Qufaydi, Saudi ambassador to the Republic of Yemen; and Yasin Ahmad Muqbil, Yemeni charge d'affaires in Saudi Arabia.[passage omitted]

Saudi-Yemeni Committee Forming To Settle Dispute

NC2301142495 Paris AFP in English 1332 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Jan 23 (AFP)—Yemen and Saudi Arabia agreed Monday [23 January] to set up a joint committee to settle their border dispute, Yemeni parliamentary speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar announced.

The committee will be headed by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal and Yemeni Planning Minister 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jamal.

Shaykh al-Ahmar, on a visit to Riyadh since Sunday, told AFP that its task would be to outline an accord to settle the 60-year-old dispute and discuss ways to develop Saudi-Yemeni ties.

Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said last Tuesday [17 January] his country accepted a settlement on the basis of a renewal of the Ta'if accord of 1934, which assigned the provinces of Najran, Jizan and 'Asir to the Saudi kingdom.

Yemeni and Saudi forces have clashed several times on the border, most recently on January 10.

Both sides pledged to avoid the use of force following Syrian and Egyptian mediation amid a tense military stand-off.

Shaykh al-Ahmar, accompanied by Planning Minister 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jamal, was paying his second visit to the kingdom in less than a month. He heads the Islamic fundamentalist Al-Islah party, which is in the ruling coalition.

His visit was aimed at preparing the ground for a meeting between Salih and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. The shaykh met the defence minister, Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and Prince Sa'ud on Sunday.

United Arab Emirates

Iraqi Islamic Opposition Writer Said Arrested

NC2101190395 Paris AFP in English 1813 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Jan 21 (AFP)—Security forces in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have arrested a prominent member of the Iraqi Islamic opposition at his Abu Dhabi home, a London-based human rights association said Saturday [21 January].

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-'Ali, a lawyer and writer, was arrested Monday, four days after returning from the United States, where he took part in an annual Moslem youth conference, Liberty said in a statement to AFP in Cyprus.

Security forces raided his home in Abu Dhabi and seized a large quantity of books, manuscripts, articles and personal documents, said Liberty, a human rights watchdog for Moslem countries.

The group said friends of Shaykh al-'Ali were unable to establish the reasons for his arrest or the charges against him.

Shaykh al-'Ali left Iraq in 1971 because he was being sought by the secret services for his opposition to the Baghdad regime, the Liberty statement said.

He lived in Kuwait for nine years before moving to the UAE, where he became an expert in Islamic studies at the Islamic affairs ministry. He resigned shortly after to devote himself to writing.

Liberty also said that an associate of Shaykh al-'Ali from the Islamic Forum in the emirate of al-Shariqah, 'Abd-al-Jalil 'Ilwan, was arrested recently by security services.

Yemen

President Salih Gives Paris News Conference

JN2101152195 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2025 GMT 20 Jan 95

[News conference by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih with unidentified correspondents in Paris; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Salih] Welcome to you all. I am prepared to answer any of your questions. [words indistinct]

[Correspondent] What is the current position on the border problems? Are these only border problems, or is there a political background to these problems?

[Salih] First of all, I am pleased to meet with the journalists, both the brother Arabs and the foreign friends, in Paris. Regarding the standing border dispute between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, this dispute is not new. It dates back to 1934. The border dispute between Yemen and the brothers in Saudi Arabia rises every now and then. We always talk with the brothers in Saudi Arabia. We tell them we are prepared to resolve the border problems in a friendly manner within the framework of a brotherly dialogue, and in a manner that guarantees the legitimate rights of the two neighboring Arab and Muslim countries. But, very regrettably, what happened last week is not new to us. The brothers in Saudi Arabia have constantly, since 1934, been encroaching [on Yemeni territory], especially in the northeastern region on the borders of the governorates of al-Jawf, Hadhramaut, and al-Maharah.

Despite the ceaseless appropriation of these lands, Yemen accepted the situation in a brotherly spirit. Yemen says that regardless of how much of the land is appropriated, a time will come when we can talk with the brothers in Saudi Arabia and resolve the problem in a brotherly spirit since all Arab territories are one and all Muslim states are one.

However, the brotherly ties worsened and tension prevailed, especially at the time of the Gulf War. As the brother Arab journalists know [words indistinct] this is untrue. One of the allegations was that Iraqi missiles, aircraft, and experts were stationed in Yemen. This was part of the scenario of conspiracy against the Yemeni territory. We tolerated that campaign, despite the fact that the world community knew of these facts, particularly the UN Security Council permanent member states, which are super powers that have extensive intelligence networks and knew that Yemen did not have such alleged weapons.

That scenario of conspiracy against the unity of Yemen continued after the Gulf War. Yemen entered into a test with secessionist leaders who wanted to take the Yemeni homeland back to the era that existed before 22 May 1990. But, our people were great. They foiled that scheme when they decided to defend unity. That scheme stipulated that Yemeni forces would fight each other so that the scenario of the appropriation of Yemeni lands could continue. On that basis, the military areas in the eastern and northern regions were evacuated when the fighting flared in the southern part of Yemen. These areas were evacuated and only a few members of the border guard force stationed in the northern and eastern deserts remained. These individuals were being paid by the Yemeni Government. In view of their [word indistinct] and the nature of the land, these Yemeni individuals [words indistinct] Saudi authorities, which started paying them wages. They, consequently, gave them wages. They, consequently, raised the Saudi flag on that Yemeni land. Some, and we say some and not all, brothers in Saudi Arabia thought this land had finally become part of their gains.

When the war ended, Yemeni forces began to return to their previous locations. [Words indistinct] these forces, these Yemeni elements which were raising the Saudi flag on Yemeni territory. The problem emerged as a result of this tension. Saudi forces were mobilized on three levels; ground, air, and naval forces. These forces cannot be taken lightly. They represent the largest strike force, most probably, in the Arab homeland to date. These forces moved to [word indistinct] to threaten Yemen's security, sovereignty, and independence. In spite of this, we did not lose hope. We continued contacts with the brothers, particularly with King Fahd, to end this sedition. Contacts continued during the tension in the northern area. We were surprised to see the arrival of Syrian Vice President Brother 'Abd- al-Halim Khaddam and Syrian Foreign Minister Brother Faruq al-Shar' for mediation purposes [words indistinct] the Arabs this fragmentation while we seek ways to restore Arab solidarity and amity and how to clear the atmosphere that prevailed during and after the Gulf war. We responded to the brothers in Syria who asked us to withdraw our forces from the areas they had reached [words indistinct] the element who were raising the Saudi flag. We informed them that these were our lands, and that to end the war scheme, we urge you to withdraw them, especially since you informed us that you have a ranking committee that enjoys decisionmaking to hold a dialogue with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for reaching a just and comprehensive solution to the question of the Yemeni borders. [sentence as heard] The committee is formed of House of Representatives Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar; Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister, who is in charge of the Yemeni borders file with the kingdom, and brother 'Abd-al-Qadir Bajammal, deputy prime minister, who had promised the brothers in the kingdom that the delegation would visit them before this transient incident took place in the northern area.

[Correspondent] And after the tension took place?

[Salih] They called for (?expediting) the committee. The [word indistinct] brothers called for withdrawing these positions from our land. We withdrew one position, and one position, deep within the territory, remained with them. They said this is to activate the negotiations. We said: We have no objection even if they say at a distance of 100 km or vice versa, this will be no problem because the problem is a border one and needs to be definitively settled, because it has existed for 60 years.

These forces were withdrawn from deep within Yemeni territory. [Words indistinct] correspondents said: How can you withdraw your forces from your land? Yes, we withdrew from our land. We withdrew from our land because we wanted to foil a scheme for war which is not of our choosing. Perhaps, it is a foreign scenario and a scheme that seeks to ignite the region. We are peace advocates, advocates of security and stability. Yemen has its own economic worries. It shoulders a heavy burden, particularly after it emerged from a destructive war in which it lost some $11 billion. This is what your brothers and friends in Yemen have to say.

[Correspondent] How do you explain the fact that Saudi Arabia, over the past six months, has been establishing a military base in Jizan?

[Salih] This is not new. They have a base in Jizan, a base in Khamis Mushayt, and a base in Sharawrah. When relations are normal, there is no apprehension. But, when relations are not normal, apprehensions arise.

[Correspondent] In light of some Gulf countries stands on the Middle East cause, what is Yemen's stand on the issue, the peace process, and negotiations?

[Salih] Yemen's stand on the peace process is explicit. We support peace and not capitulation; a just peace that restores all the territories that Israel occupies, particularly the Palestinian territories, the Golan, and southern Lebanon. It should not be a temporary peace. We want a lasting peace in which the usurped lands should be returned to its owners, that is, if lasting and firm peace is to be attained.

As I understand it, the Arabs have offered more than they should, and they have found no response from Israel. We hope the international community which calls for peace and those who sponsor peace, particularly the United States, the sponsor of the new world order, will pressure Israel to return the usurped rights so there can be lasting peace [words indistinct]

[Correspondent] Is the problem with Saudi Arabia only a problem of land and positions [words indistinct] militarily, economically, and perhaps politically. What is the nature of your relations with the United States [words indistinct]

[Salih] Yemen's relations with the United States are good relations. But there are no major interests the United States (?exploits) in Yemen as in other countries. We believe that what [word indistinct] the United States is the method Yemen has adopted: Democracy and party pluralism, which is a unique model in the Middle East region. As for interests, [words indistinct]

As for the French visit, it was positive and we found complete understanding from the friends in France. The discussion dealt with many aspects of bilateral relations, what takes place in our region, and fruitful and positive cooperation. The upshot in general is positive [passage indistinct] with respect to settling the question of borders or their demarcation, we agree, within the framework of dialogue, that the problem of the borders will be resolved on the basis of the al-Ta'if committee as an integrated whole; we have duties and rights, and the brothers have duties and rights. A higher committee will make proposals to the brothers in the kingdom about what remains of the borders which have not been determined and demarcated, as yet, and negotiations will take place. If a solution is reached within the bilateral framework, then this will be a positive step. If not, the al-Ta'if committee will carry out arbitration. If arbitration fails, then there will be recourse to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). On this basis, Yemen has decided, that even if it is attacked, it will not go to war. It will resort to arbitration and the ICJ.

The Arab brothers and the friends will have to excuse me. I have an appointment with French officials now. [passage omitted]

Tariq 'Aziz Views Ties With Arabs, Sanctions

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[Report on interview with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by AL-THAWRAH Chief Editor Taha al-Basri, AL-QADISIYAH Chief Editor Hani Wuhayyib, ALIF BA' Chief Editor Amir al-Hulu, HAWAKARI Chief Editor Dr. Badrkhan al-Sindi, INA Director General 'Udayy al-Ta'i, BAGHDAD OBSERVER Chief Editor Naji al-Hadithi, AL-'IRAQ Chief Editor Nasrallah al-Dawudi, correspondent Dr. Salman Zaydan, and Dr. Sabah Yasin, director general of the Radio and Television Department; aired by Iraqi Television "this evening"; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 21 Jan (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz has said the position of states vis-a-vis the embargo imposed on Iraq is improving. He also said the negative attitude of the United States and its ally Britain is not spreading, but that a positive attitude is spreading, instead.

In an interview with the chief editors of newspapers and magazines and leading media people, aired by Iraqi Television this evening [as received], Tariq 'Aziz said: The positive attitude is not spreading as fast as Iraq wishes. But, in view of complications in current world conditions, we can say that, while it may be slow, there is improvement.

He stressed that the British-U.S. position, in terms of the number of Security Council members, is in the minority. He said U.S. logic does sometimes meet with approval.

Regarding the next phase and the time when the embargo imposed on Iraq will be lifted, the deputy prime minister said: One cannot tell if the embargo is going to be lifted or eased in March. However, I think the situation in March will be positive and in our favor, and negative for the U.S. position.

The interview was conducted by—in order of their questions—Dr. Sabah Yasin, director general of the Radio and Television Department; Taha al-Basri, AL-THAWRAH chief editor; Hani Wuhayyib, AL-QADISIYAH chief editor; Amir al-Hulu, ALIF BA' chief editor; Dr. Badrkhan al-Sindi, HAWAKARI chief editor; 'Udayy al-Ta'i, INA director general; Naji al-Hadithi, BAGHDAD OBSERVER chief editor; Nasrallah al-Dawudi, AL-'IRAQ chief editor; and Dr. Salman Zaydan, a correspondent.

Asked about Iraq's relationship with the Security Council, the U.S. position, and the nature of developments in this regard, Tariq 'Aziz said:

Yes. I agree with you that the council's failure to reach a resolution to lift or ease the embargo means, in practice, that the embargo will continue. However, we must view the subject in a more precise way, which is required at this advanced stage in the relationship between Iraq and the Security Council. Failure does not mean the issuance of a resolution by the council to renew or maintain the embargo. But it means the failure to achieve a resolution in this regard. I would like to explain that in 1992 we went twice to the UN Security Council, in March and in November. There was a kind of decision to maintain the embargo, because the statements the council issued noted that the council believes conditions were still not appropriate for changing the so-called sanctions regime against Iraq. This means a majority, or a unanimity, in the council supported this view. After March 1994, as you recall, the council stopped issuing these statements; after the session, the UN Security Council appears before the press to say we have reviewed the situation. This reflects an improvement in the position of the member states.

In the past, no one in the council has called for easing or lifting the blockade. But now, several countries are calling for it. However, the British-backed U.S. objection is blocking efforts to issue a resolution to ease or lift the sanctions. As you know, a third of the council's member states is replaced every year. Five new members have joined the council. They are: Indonesia from Asia, Botswana from Africa, Italy and Germany from Europe, and Honduras from Latin America. At the same time, five member states left. They are: Pakistan, Djibouti, Spain, Brazil, and New Zealand. During the last debate at the Security Council, six member states, three permanent and three nonpermanent, urged the council to recognize the progress made and to reflect it in its position toward Iraq. During this month's session, the position of six member states remained unchanged. Indonesia and Oman, who replaced Spain and Brazil in the council, adopted a clear-cut position on lifting the blockade.

The three permanent member states, Russia, China, and France, as well as Nigeria, maintained their previous positions. This does not mean the other member states are objecting. Rather, they have not yet taken any clear and declared position in this regard. So, we have six states opposed to two states, which are still maintaining a negative position. Some of the remaining seven member states are waiting and some others are planning to develop their positions. Italy and Germany, two important countries in Europe, during our meetings with their officials showed a clear readiness to study the facts and understand the basic aspects of Iraq's position. However, they were not expected to take a declared or clear position in the first month or at the first session. But, Germany agreed to receive a high-ranking diplomatic and technical delegation led by Lieutenant General Engineer 'Amir Rashid and Dr. Riyad all-Qaysi to explain to German officials Iraq's position toward current issues. This is a positive stand. We hope Italy will follow suit. The problem is that Italy is facing a ministerial crisis. Its government resigned and a new one was formed yesterday or today, but has not yet exercised its duties because the parliament has not yet given it its confidence. However, there is a chance, and we can explain the situation to the Italians.

There is a balance in the council between positive and negative positions, if we can put it that way. There is a development in the positive side, and there are no new negative moves. The British- backed U.S. position is gaining no new ground while the positive aspect is gaining a new ground, the most important element of which is the French position. In the past, some people said France hesitated between progress and retreat. I used to assess that position objectively. However, France agreed to hold a political meeting with me at the French Foreign Ministry and decided to open an interests section in Baghdad. This means there is clear progress in the French position.

During January's debates, the six member states I mentioned before stressed the need to ease or lift the blockade when Ekeus presents his expected report next April, an idea that is always proposed. The majority of the member states that support this idea said they will work for it during the next weeks and months. Rejected ideas are not usually neglected, and this idea will be dealt with in the future, God willing.

During that session, an important development in the position on Ekeus' file took place. In the past, they waited for Ekeus' report and his views on the monitoring system. Sometimes, he told them the data in the previous program were incomplete. Although he admitted there was cooperation with Iraq and that there was progress, he gave the impression that the file was incomplete. This was exploited. Opponents said the incomplete part of the file was very big. Ekeus also used not to give any percentage of the progress that was made, and when he said the data were incomplete, he did not give a percentage of that. But during this session, after we held lengthy discussions in Moscow and in Paris this month, and in light of our deliberations with council member states, focus was put on the percentage issue. The statement the French envoy made says it is impossible to achieve complete progress and that the situation should be built on this concept. It adds that if the situation is satisfactory, then this will mean the Security Council goals are achieved and that the council should move in accordance with its resolution and with paragraphs 21 and 22.

I can confidently say there is development in the position of these states. There is no expansion in the negative positions of the United States and its ally, Britain. Instead, the positive position is growing, though not at the speed we might wish. However, under the complicated current international situation, we can say a development exists, although it is slow.

The British-U.S. position, in terms of the number of Security Council members, is in the minority. U.S. logic at the Security Council does not meet with approval; sometimes it is even rejected, while at other times it is not understood how America can use this logic. This logic is primitive, i.e., black and white, or as the Russian ambassador put it, it is all or nothing. This logic cannot prevail in the international community and in international relations. It cannot prevail at the Security Council. It is unprecedented. Therefore, it is the position of a minority in terms of numbers, and a weak position in terms of influence. The U.S. delegate has said there is no progress, that Iraq is not cooperative, and that all Iraq has done is a result of pressure. She also said that even our recognizing Kuwait was due to pressure, which means there was no influential Russian diplomatic initiative and that the Russian-Iraqi dialogue was not the one that bore fruit with this state.

One of the new members, the Italian delegate, said: It seems bilateral diplomacy is very fruitful. He cited as an example the success of the Russian initiative in November. This is because the black U.S. position is not acceptable at the council.

The speech of the British delegate is indicative. For the first time, I am told—I did not attend the meeting—the British delegate did not prepare a written speech but gave a relatively short impromptu speech, and did not use the language used by the U.S. delegate. It is true that in the final analysis he was certainly negative, but he did not adopt an attitude I would call primitive, or black and white. Instead, he used language that involved relative terms and in some cases admitted progress has been made.

Asked about the motives for America's insistence on continuing the blockade and whether he expects an acute contradiction in views within the Security Council, 'Aziz said: I would like to talk about the reporting in the Western media and the media of the regional countries, which is playing the U.S. game. I say there is an attempt to make the Iraqi people and the Iraqi leadership lose hope in the possibility of lifting the blockade. This is a sinister game, because losing hope in lifting the blockade will certainly lead to reactions that America and Britain will use to prolong the blockade. Thus, we must be careful in our analysis and our treatment of this game. It is true that the blockade continues, despite the debate and discussion at the council. When Tariq 'Aziz says there was disagreement in reaching the decision, he says so after a careful assessment of the situation and judging from the position of someone who knows where things stand. When you move toward a destination and have completed 90 percent of the trip, you say that you have not yet reached your goal. Also when you walk 10 kilometers, you still have not reached the destination. But there is a difference between when you started on the first kilometer and when you have reached the 90th, where you have only 10 kilometers left; you need patience and persistence to finish the remaining kilometers to the destination. On this basis, we must weigh the situation realistically and in proportion to the development of the international position.

'Aziz added: In 1992 I went to the Security Council twice. We held a formal Security Council meeting and we discussed matters. A statement—more a resolution than a statement really—was issued. This meant a change had taken place. Currently, there is a conflict inside the Security Council. How will this conflict end? Will the United States be able to influence the council indefinitely? Does the United States have the ability to influence it? U.S. capabilities and influence are limited. It is also using pretexts. While some of these pretexts are technically sound, they are remediable; we are dealing with them. You remember that last time I said there is a political attitude and that technical and legal pretexts are being exploited. We must counter them; we are actually doing so. Some of these pretexts need time, some can be dealt with quickly, and others are artificial pretexts, just like those used in November. This has no effect. When we examine the reactions of the Security Council members to the proposals of the U.S. representative, we see that not all of them repeated what she said. The French representative asked the UN secretary general to contact the Iraqis and see how the issue could be handled. He reported that before the meeting began he asked the secretary general about this situation and if he was happy with it; he said the secretary general was satisfied with Iraq's position. Therefore, he was not influenced by the U.S. pretext and, indeed, played down its importance.

He continued: What remains is for us to wait and see what happens in March or April. I have said the situation is developing; consequently, we will find ourselves in a more developed situation. Will this more developed situation decide the issue? I cannot say. As I said in my previous meetings with you—not out of fear or irresponsibility—this is a big political game and I cannot say in adance that definitely, yes, the blockade will be lifted or eased in March. I estimate, however, that the situation in March will be more in our favor and less in favor of the U.S position. There are signs, however. The first of these is that we talked with all the member states in Moscow, then in Paris, and later in New York. We pointed out that they were speaking about all or nothing. We told them this was unacceptable and illogical. We said achievements had been made that must be assessed and that they should react to these achievements. The so-called system of sanctions was imposed on Iraq in 1990; and now, after four and one-half years, nothing, not one iota, has changed about this system. The Security Council has not made even one millimeter of progress. Is this fair? No one says this is fair. What they do say is that there are difficulties that we know—they mean the U.S. position—and they ask us to eliminate the pretexts, so the Security Council will be able to change things. I do not wish to make predictions that suggest optimism that is not based on concrete facts. However, in March or April, there must be draft resolutions of one sort or another, because the 90-km march I mentioned will be closer to its destination in March, and consequently something must happen.

'Aziz said: The Russian ambassador said he would work to reactivate the situation in the coming period, and that whoever has a political stance should vote according to that stance. Naturally, we want to present the whole picture to our people, but when one speaks on television, it is not only our people who are listening but others as well. Therefore, I do not want to divulge all the details of the discussions that were held with a number of states but there are serious indications that these states will not remain silent forever about the continuation of this situation. This does not mean they will be silent for 10 years, but for a matter of weeks and months. These states have their weight and interests. I spoke with the representative of one of these states. I told him to tell the Americans: You are not imposing a blockade on Iraq, but on us, in one way or another. In other words, when they participated in the blockade on Iraq, they sacrificed their national interests. There were reasons of which they were convinced, but these reasons have disappeared now. So tell the Americans, whether Christopher or Albright, that their insistence on imposing the blockade on Iraq is harming Iraq, harming you, harming Turkey, and harming Jordan, Brazil, and other states.

In 1991, 1992, and 1993 the United States wanted to harm Iraq, which had no one to defend it. Now a significant and substantial number of states say the continuation of the blockade on Iraq is, first of all, unjustified, and secondly, harms them. Therefore, you have become part of a group which is not convinced about the continuation of the blockade and which is being harmed by its continuation. This is an important leap in our stand and our place in the international community.

On the possible use by the United States and Britain of the veto during the voting on lifting or easing the embargo against Iraq, 'Aziz said that from the legal aspect a veto prevents the issuance of any resolution. However, the resolutions that imposed the blockade were issued for a situation that existed in 1990. The states, including the five permanent members, that participated in the blockade and voted on Resolutions 661 and 687 were convinced then. Now the circumstances have changed. This has already been proved. A veto now will have another result, namely, a clash with the interests of the other members of the council, clashes of interest with other states outside the council, and a clash with the principles by which the United Nations works. This kind of veto will not be ordinary. Will the states whose interests will be harmed by the continuation of the blockade on Iraq heed this veto? Here, the U.S. stance will appear as it is in fact, but publicly and in a more dramatic way. It will appear as an inflexible stance contrary to the content of the resolutions and the UN Charter, and as harmful to the interests of other states, some of which are partners of the United States in several fields. This will be a very good situation, but how it will end? I cannot speculate, but certainly there will be a crisis as a result of the U.S. stance. The United States will be told that in accordance with the Security Council resolutions, the blockade on Iraq must be eased and lifted. However, if you do not want to cooperate with Iraq or deal with it, this is your business. Behave toward

Iraq as you are behaving toward Cuba. In that case, we will not be harmed. Cuba is harmed by the U.S. blockade because it has no resources, is close to the United States, and buys many of its needs from the United States. If the United States wants to boycott Iraq, it can boycott it.

'Aziz added: In 1967, diplomatic relations between Iraq and America were cut off. We restored them only in 1984, as you know. So what were the negative effects, as far as Iraq is concerned, of the U.S. boycott?

In response to questions dealing with Iraq's relations with the Arab states, the Arab League, and foreign states, 'Aziz answered these as follows:

Iraq is one of the countries that cannot be boycotted for a long time or forever. There are not many such countries. This is because Iraq is important by virtue of its strategic location, its potential, as demonstrated by its underground resources and its heritage, and its capability deriving from the 17 and 30 July revolutions and leader Saddam Husayn. It is a capability that is clear, visible, and tangible in all fields. Iraq was struck in 1991 by an attempt to break it as a country and destroy its spirit; struck by a conspiracy against its national leadership and by attempts to partition it, control it, contain it, and plunder its wealth. But the extremist powers, in their imperialist stands, failed to achieve their objective. So, they had to do one of two things: Either continue their ferocious aggression in its diverse forms to achieve their objective, or back down and start dealing with Iraq.

Now we see three positions at the international level. The first likes, admires, and supports Iraq and wishes to maintain relations with it; indeed, some continue to maintain relations with us despite the blockade. They do so not in the sense of violating the resolutions, but in the sense of expressing a position by states that have adopted a positive stance regarding Iraq and maintained their diplomatic relations and some economic relations, in accordance with the terms of the UN. There are many such countries, particularly in the Third World. The second group comprises the states that took part, directly or indirectly, in the aggression and in the blockade. This group is made up of two categories. The first is comprised of countries that have gone a long way in expressing their positive position aboout Iraq, such as Russia, France, and others, while the second group of countries is still waiting and preparing itself for this. The third and last group is made up of America, which maintains its former position. Thus, there is a shift inside and outside the Security Council toward restoring relations and dealing with Iraq on a political and economic basis. I do not want to speak on behalf of other states, for they themselves must come out and say they will make such and such a decision.

I am not saying this on its behalf, but Spain's position was constructive and positive at the Security Council and sided with the legal interpretation and application of the council's resolutions. Whenever the Iraq issue was raised for debate, it stressed the need to take into consideration the progress made and pointed out that the council must be responsive to Iraq. I visited Spain in 1994 and met with its foreign minister, which is known. Our meetings were objective; so was the Spanish stand. Therefore, I expect Spain to continue this objective attitude by all means available to it. As far as I know, a Spanish delegation will come soon to follow up on progress in bilateral relations. This attitude has begun to surface, not among all European states, but in some important states which I prefer not to name so as not to embarrass them and in order to help them take their steps at a time appropriate to them, without prior announcement on our part, because this could be used to pressure them.

Concerning the position of the Arab countries and the prospects of developing it with the aim of ending the Iraqi people's hardships, Tariq 'Aziz said it is true today that the blockade is an Arab blockade, because four Arab and two Islamic countries have common borders with Iraq and if these countries had not submitted to the U.S. conditions and imposed a blockade on Iraq, the status of the blockade would be different today. He said it is a cruel and hard fact, but the Arab position has now been exposed to us and to the citizens. He noted that several Arab governments are submissive to U.S. wishes and that the leader president mentioned this fact in the speech he made on the anniversary of the aggression, noting that they submit, but not voluntarily. He said if the position of country X is considered, it will be found upon logical analysis that the country must maintain its relations with Iraq, restore them if they are severed, and contribute to lifting the blockade, because this will serve its interests as a state and its people's interests; but it still does not do so. On the contrary, it spends money and coordinates with the United States and with others to maintain the blockade, acting against its own people's interests and its interests as a state, either because it is subservient to the United States or because it is short-sighted.

'Aziz added: When you declare today that diplomatic overtures have succeeded with France, you will want to ask how they have succeeded. This happened because the French were listening and met with us at the United Nations. We also sent representatives on a nonpolitical level who carried messages. They listened and because they listened we had a dialogue and learned what their concerns were. They listened to our views and we achieved the current status in our relations. However, whenever this or that ruler takes a step forward, he receives a notice from the United States telling him: Stop. He then takes two steps backward. This is what has happened. Some officials—we don't want to name them—sometimes make remarks that are reasonably positive, but after a week or so they reverse themselves and say the opposite, which proves the U.S. ambassador has told them: This is unacceptable. Again those who were part of our delegation—led by Taha Yasin Ramadan—to the Casablanca Islamic and Arab summit realized that the majority of the conferees were prepared to issue a positive statement calling for an end to the blockade. The summit chairmanship, represented by His Majesty King Hassan II and the Moroccan delegation, were prepared and actively sought to make that major Islamic gathering adopt a position commensurate with its nature as an Islamic group. However, the U.S. ambassador came and took up residence at the hotel where the delegations were staying and began visiting the ministers, one by one. He warned them not to support a statement calling for lifting the embargo on Iraq. Some of these people came and visited our delegation and told Taha Yasin Ramadan and our foreign minister: We support you in our hearts but we are afraid. Don't you see this man? They meant the U.S. ambassador.

'Aziz added: We are not talking here about the stance of the Arab masses, because it is known. We will not talk about the Arab regimes. If a confidential and honest vote is taken at the Arab League and if these regimes are asked whether or not they like Iraq and whether or not they would like to lift the blockade and restore ties with it, more than two-thirds would give positive answers. The position of those who care is clear and the instructions of his excellency the president to Iraqi diplomats are clear. We have serious and sincere prospects of restoring things to normality. And for the record, there is an Arab regime that has no benefits for us, yet we are making endeavors toward it. As Iraqis, we do not act in a way that might infringe on our dignity and create illusions for some shortsighted and ill-intentional quarters in some regimes.

Regarding UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali's statement on his readiness to hold negotiations with Iraq to ease the blockade imposed on it, 'Aziz said: I cannot give you an official and decisive answer as to what Butrus-Ghali means. But from analyzing the discussion held with the British ambassador, although he did not say Butrus-Ghali did not make himself clear, I believe he is inclined toward Resolutions 706 and 712 and has a tendency to ease the terms. Of course, I do not know what kind of easing he has in mind, so I cannot say if it is a substantial or an artificial easing to eliminate the bad aspects in the resolutions. Thus, it is beneficial for us to follow up, inquire, and see what he means. His description of what happened in the past was not accurate. I told him in our meetings that I was sorry to hear him say such things and told him it was an inaccurate description. We believe we should hold technical talks to explore the possibility of eliminating the negative portions of the two resolutions. We could not get in touch with Butrus-Ghali because he was not in New York. It was difficult to contact him directly or indirectly to learn if he had any new ideas. At the same time, it is not right to deal with any topic of this nature without taking into account that the question of implementing paragraph 22 has become a hot issue. To divert attention from this paragraph and talk about partial paragraphs may be negative in one aspect. But the principle is that our leadership has said: At any time the UN allows Iraq to export its oil to buy medicine and food without unfair conditions that infringe on sovereignty—even if they say export one million, half a million, three quarter of a million barrels—then why not? However, this should not be at the expense of the full implementation of paragraph 22. We have always been careful in our talk with the General Secretariat. Our main and pressing goal is the full implementation of paragraph 22.

Asked about how firm Russia, France, and China's positive positions are and about the possibility that the United States might exercise pressure to change these positions, Mr. Tariq 'Aziz said these countries' positions were not adopted last month in order to be changed the next month. For two years, China has been calling for easing and gradually lifting the blockade on Iraq. If it is appropriate to say, China has not taken part in any negative expressions against Iraq. It adopted a balanced position. Meanwhile, Russia's position has been developing since 1993. There are political contacts in which Russia's foreign minister has visited Iraq twice and met with President Saddam Husayn. Moreover, economic relations are developing between Iraq and both Russia and France. These countries are too strong to be pressured into disavowing their positions. Although they are aware of the United States' power and its true position, these countries adopted a positive stand.

Therefore, I am not worried about them going back on their positions. However, is there any U.S. pressure exerted on them? Well, yes there is. This U.S. pressure gets strong sometimes and weakens at other times. These countries sometimes exert pressure on the United States itself. What they said at the recent Security Council meeting represents pressure on their part on the United States; there were two totally different languages present.

Some have said that because of the Chechen problem, the Russian role at the Security Council is not as strong as before. You have listened to statements by the Russian ambassador. These statements do not indicate that Russia is using the Chechen issue in an attempt to appease the United State at Iraq's expense. Sometimes, there may be a link between positions, but there is also a separation between one case and another.

Concerning the relationship between the United States' position on the Chechen issue and its position on northern Iraq, Mr. Tariq 'Aziz said: When comparing the United States' position on the Chechen issue to its position on northern Iraq, we conclude there is a contradiction and a use of double standards. It is not something new for the United States to use double standards in its positions on any world issue, such as human rights, democracy, and other issues, and in its positions on internal situations and national unity.

At the same time, the United States has no right to interfere in any big country's internal situation just as it did in other cases. What I mean is that the situation in northern Iraq came about as a result of a collaboration between the so-called Kurdistan Front and the Turkish Government during the era of Ozal, who took part in the aggression and was one of its main parties. Ozal agreed on this situation and now, making changes in Turkey is, of course, much harder than the agreement made in 1991. However, as I clearly noted, if such a situation did exist, Albright would claim the Iraqi Government is the one persecuting the Kurds in Iraq and then when we explain the case for the Security Council, we weaken and shake the U.S. stands.

Commenting on the position of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states on the blockade and on changes in some of these positions, Mr. Tariq 'Aziz said: There is an escalation of positions among the ruling leaderships of these states. The masses in the GCC states are saying: End the boycott of Iraq, not from an ethical perspective only, but because there are also interests in and dangers facing the Gulf region. The isolation of Iraq and its people and harming it in this manner will not serve the security, interests, and future of these states. Such expressions are increasing. If we recall, when the French foreign minister visited the region during the so-called October crisis, he said: I saw that all the countries in the region do not want to isolate Iraq and do not want to keep the blockade against it. They want to restore things to normal. Of course, these are statements by the foreign minister of a country that is concerned about the region and when he refers to his government, he briefs it on these facts to help it adopt a positive position on Iraq, which should then reflect on the positions of China and Russia and have a direct effect on making decisions regarding Iraq.

On the statements by Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid following the Alexandria summit and during his visit to Kuwait, Tariq 'Aziz said: These statements were more extremist than the statements by the Kuwaiti foreign minister. This is not in harmony with his role as a secretary general. He is biased and is adopting the U.S. interpretation, which is the most extremist interpretation. The extremist U.S. position is adopted by the Arab League secretary general. This does not represent the position of the Arab countries at all. This is a personal position and he shoulders the responsibility for it.

Asked about the next review of the siege and if it will see the end of U.S. domination of decisionmaking, Tariq 'Aziz said: It is difficult to say we will see that at any given moment in the future, because U.S. domination is not like a light that you switch on or off in a moment. However, U.S. domination is diminishing compared to what the United States was doing at the Security Council in 1990 and 1991 toward Iraq and others. At present, we see clear shrinkage and deterioration in the domination, but we cannot say this domination has been eliminated. In 1991 and 1992, the Security Council members voted for the resolutions the United States wanted on Iraq, but now the United States cannot work out a new resolution against Iraq on any subject it wants because it will not be endorsed and it will face more than one veto. At present, the Untied States is on the defensive, not the offensive, at the council. Those who attack the U.S. position are on the rise and those who defend it are on the decline. As I said at the beginning, there is a rising positive position in favor of Iraq in the West. Certainly, by March this support will increase compared with its current situation.

Asked if the United States might fabricate a new pretext during the next stage and about the Russian position in such a case, Tariq 'Aziz said: In fact, during every meeting the United States raises old or new pretexts. Sometimes it fabricates a play, like it did in November. During the latest meeting, and in 1991, 1992, and partially in 1993, the U.S. position included a number of negative points toward Iraq, and a large number of Security Council members then agreed with the United States, not on all these points, but on most of them.

International public opinion and all political and economic analysts now say the main U.S. objective sought by perpetuating the siege on Iraq is to keep Iraq out of the oil market so Saudi Arabia and Kuwait can sell more oil and pay the huge bills the United States imposed on them. Most of these bills are paid to the United States and a slight portion of them go to Britain.

Political and economic circles in the United States, Europe, and the whole world say this is a violation, and that there is no legal or political justification for the continuation of the siege on Iraq, other than making Kuwait and Saudi Arabia sell oil that is above their OPEC quotas in order to pay bills. Hence, where is this talk about human rights, democracy, international law, and the new world order? This story began with oil and ends with oil. This is unacceptable to Russia, France, Japan, and Brazil, regardless of whether their positions on Iraq are close or distant. It is unacceptable to maintain the siege on a country in order to pay bills. This was the crux of this great effort that was made and based, as we agree, on Iraq's steadfastness and the world's appreciation of the meaning of this steadfastness. It is also based on Iraq's position in terms of its location and the additional capabilities created by the revolution and inspired by the leader. These factors should lead to the lifting of the siege. However, is the time ahead of us longer than the time behind us? I cannot answer, but I think any objective observer—even if he is a foreigner—will say the period that is left is shorter. True, each passing day is difficult. It is difficult for us and our people. However, difficulty becomes harder in its last stages. As the leader president once said, it is like the last 10 days of [the fasting month of] Ramadan. The first day of Ramadan is difficult, the 10th day is difficult, but the last 10 days are more difficult. However, they are not like the whole 30 days of the month. We have always said and emphasized that steadfastness is basic for lifting the siege.

Asked if the Kurdish issue is discussed with the diplomats he meets, and if it is useful to speak about the contents of the agreement reached following meetings between the Iraqi leadership and the concerned Kurdish parties in 1991, Tariq 'Aziz said: Yes, this issue is discussed. We do refuse to discuss it in the official sense of the word. For instance, if an ambassador comes and says let us discuss the internal situation in Iraq, we tell him it is none of his business. However, they raise the so-called issue of the persecution of Kurds and Shiites in the news media and during the UN Security Council deliberations, particularly the Americans and the British. We reply to them, whether through the news media, interviews, or during discussions. In my interview with CNN, I replied to them. I also replied to them in other interviews with the press and in discussions. I met with the British ambassador for 75 minutes. He raised this issue. I told him: You have provided comfort, but has there been comfort for the Kurdish people since the day you came here? You accuse us of persecuting the Kurds, who are our people. In 1991, specifically October 1991, we withdrew our administration. Since then, we have not been engaged in any conflict or confrontation with their leaderships. So, what has happened with what you call "Provide Comfort" since 1991? Turkey shells the northern region and Iran intervenes in and shells the region. They themselves fight each other. Now there is fighting between the Jalal [Talabani] and Mas'ud [Barzani] groups. Even the UN group has quit working because they cannot continue. So, is this "Provide Comfort?"

On the political level, I explained this thoroughly to the French foreign minister. I told him: If the world, Europe, and the West were fair, Iraq would have been described as being an example country regarding the so-called minorities issue. This is the history of Iraq, before and after the Ba'th Party assumed power in Iraq. Despite this, Iraq is the country against which this issue is raised the most. I also told him: Take the Kurdish issue in 1970, as an example. The UN Security Council did not adopt any resolution against us. The United States was not the only power in the world for some to fear, and, consequently, recognize the national rights of our Kurdish people in Iraq.

President Saddam Husayn himself went to Barzani in Galalah in 1970, and told him that the leadership has approved the autonomy principle. This took place in 1970. Now, there are French people who are aware of these facts. I mentioned names to him. The autonomy was implemented. I also explained to him the entire situation as it is, including the Kurds' participation in the Iraqi authority, the Legislative Council, and the Executive Council. I explained to him all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Iraqi Kurds since 1970. I explained to him the talks, or the dialogue, between us and the Kurdistan Front leaderships, and how this dialogue was stopped pursuant to U.S. orders. They [the Americans] said verbatim: "This agreement will strengthen the Iraqi leadership at a time when our plan is based on changing the Iraqi leadership." I told him this is known, I spoke about it, and I once wrote about it in THE NEW YORK TIMES. I also explained this at the UN Security Council. He said they cannot support any attempt to fragment Iraq or undermine its national unity. We explain this stand to all who are interested.

Regarding the agreement, this issue has nothing to do with the situation at the UN Security Council. This is an internal issue between us and our people in the north. The statement issued by the recent Council of Minister's session says the leadership is still tolerant and ready to respond to any national initiative that leads to returning matters to normal. So, there is a stand in our country. This stand is not new, but it was announced under these circumstances. They should respond to this stand. If they respond, it will be good. If they do not respond, they will be held responsible by the masses of our Kurdish people in their region. Reports say the masses of our Kurdish people hold them responsible for the catastrophes there. Indeed, they are responsible for them. This is the situation. True, our media capabilities are weak and cannot be compared to the capabilities of the United States and Britain, but it is also true that this situation is now known; namely, that there is an abnormal situation in the northern region, and that this situation cannot continue because its contradictions and conflicts will expose those who support the continuation of this situation. Our voice is louder now than before the facts of the situation in the northern region were exposed.

Bomb Explodes at Bet Lid, Causes Casualties

Radio Reports Explosion

TA2201081495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An explosive device went off at the Bet Lid Junction thirty minutes ago, causing many casualties and fatalities. Intensive care units and ambulances were summoned to the site, and nearby hospitals were alerted.

Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that the bomb exploded in the vicinity of a snack bar near a bus stop.

The police have blocked all the local junctions and are asking drivers to use alternate routes.

Death Toll Rises to 19

TA2201193195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Nineteen people were killed in the Bet Lid terrorist attack, most of them soldiers, and the names of 10 dead soldiers were released for publication about an hour ago. [passage omitted]

There are 41 wounded people in the hospitals now, including two in a critical condition, and 15 in a serious condition.

Demonstrations against terror and the government's performance are continuing in Bet Lid and elsewhere.

Islamic Jihad Claims Bombing

NC2201193595 Paris AFP in English 1838 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, Jan 22 (AFP)—The hardline Islamic Jihad in Palestine group said two of its "martyrs" carried out the double suicide bombing which left 18 people dead near Netanya in Israel on Sunday [22 January].

"The two bombs were a swift response to the massacre by Zionist soldiers of three members of our Palestinian police on January 2," the Jihad said in a statement.

Israeli troops shot the three dead at the Erez border crossing into the Gaza Strip, claiming the Palestinians fired first.

The bombings were also to avenge a Gaza teacher, Hani al-'Abid, a Moslem fundamentalist who died in a car bombing blamed on Israel last November 2, said the statement faxed to AFP in Jerusalem.

The Jihad named the two men as Anwar Muhammad 'Atiyah Sukkar, 25, from a Gaza City refugee camp, and Salah 'Abd-al-Hamid Shakir Muhammad, 27, from Rafah town.

It said the pair, members of Jihad's armed wing Qassam, died in the attack.

The group also vowed to carry out similar attacks in future, in another statement issued in Jerusalem.

It said "the Islamic Qassam combatants" set off two explosive charges near the Israeli coastal resort. Most of the casualties were Israeli soldiers.

"Our combatants exploded a first bomb. Fifteen minutes later, as the Zionists gathered to help their wounded, one of the unit's heroes blew himself up with another bomb," said the statement received by AFP.

It described the bombings as an "heroic and courageous operation" which killed or wounded "dozens of Zionists."

It added: "the fire will continue burning—we will hunt down the Zionists until the last bastard has left our holy motherland."

Neighbours of Salah Shakir Muhammad said he disappeared from his home late Saturday. Jihad militants came to his home Sunday to tell his family he had "died as a martyr."

Muhammad, a pyschotherapist, had been wounded six times by Israeli soldiers and detained for 18 days during the intifadah, or Palestinian uprising against military occupation which began in 1987, his neighbours told AFP.

Anwar Sukkar, a carpenter, had been detained twice for several days by Palestinian police since the start of Palestinian self-rule last May, one of his relatives said.

His father was a member of the Palestinian police, sources said. The mosque next to his home announced his death Sunday.

Earlier an anonymous telephone caller to Israel radio claimed the bombings on behalf of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

Israeli police were also checking certain similarities to a series of explosions believed to have been prepared by a Hamas bomb- maker dubbed the "engineer".

The bombs weighed between 10 and 15 kilos each (22 and 33 pounds) and may have been primed by wanted Palestinian fundamentalist Yehya 'Ayyash.

'Ayyash, 29, is blamed for two bombings—one last April which left 13 dead and the October 19 bus bombing in Tel Aviv which killed 22.

The Islamic Jihad leader Fathi al-Shaqaqi told the Iranian news agency IRNA that suicide attacks against Israelis would continue with "the utmost vigour and new tactics."

The Damascus-based leader also told Hizballah radio in Lebanon that the attack was "the only adequate response to the continued establishment of settlements on the occupied West Bank and in Jerusalem."

Meanwhile in a statement issued in Damascus, Hamas called on "all Palestinian forces to struggle militarily" to force Israel to halt the expansion of settlements and pull out of the West Bank.

'Text' of Islamic Jihad Statement

JN2201153795 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1415 GMT 22 Jan 95

["Text" of military communique issued by the Islamic Jihad "in Palestine"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful,

Fight them, and God will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you to victory over them, and heal the breasts of believers. [Koranic verse]

The Zionists will remain a target for the knights of Islamic Jihad. Our mujahidin avenge the blood of virtuous martyrs.

Military communique issued by the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine.

From the depth of our affiliation to great Islam, in fulfillment of our sacred duty to liberate Palestine, out of fidelity to the blood of martyrs, in order to heal the breast of believers, in order to arouse the nation from its laziness, and in order to strengthen the option of Islamic jihad, the option of military jihad, the Martyr Hani 'Abid group of the Mujahid Islamic Forces-Qasam [al-qiwa al-islamiyah al-mujahidah-qasam], the military wing of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, this morning, Sunday 22 January 1995, carried out a daring, heroic operation in the heart of the Zionist entity, which resulted in the death and injury of scores of Zionists.

Our heroic mujahidin carried out a martyrdom operation in which they used two explosive devices in a central bus station frequented by the occupation soldiers at Bet Lid crossroad to the east of Tel Aviv. They detonated the first device, and when the Zionists assembled to rescue their wounded, a hero of the group, 15 minutes after the first device went off, detonated the second device which he carried on his pure body.

The Zionist security agencies acknowledged that according to initial counts, more than 18 Zionists were killed and 62 were injured, most of whom sustained serious or medium wounds. Most of those killed were Zionist soldiers who were waiting for buses to take them to where they will terrorize or humiliate our people. Ambulances and Zionist occupation army's helicopters rushed to the scene. The occupation troops sealed off the area, and erected checkpoints on the roads leading to the place where the explosion occurred. The Zionist entity's prime minister, who cut short his weekly meeting with his government's senior officials, rushed to the scene as fear and panic engulfed the Zionists. Hospitals were filled with the wounded.

O citizens of our mujahid people, O citizens of our glorious nation: The knights of Islam have set off to smash the borders of illusion and siege and enemy positions to reach the heart of Palestine and to strike with all power, as their brothers have done in Palestine in the past and all the time

On the occasion of this heroic operation, we in the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine stress the following:

1. Today our mujahidin confirm that they are the most capable in confronting the Zionist scheme. They also stress, with their action and blood, that they will confront the scheme to liquidate our nation's sacred cause and that they will continue with the confrontation before, after, and despite the failed feeble agreements. They also confirm that they will continue the march of blood and martyrdom until the liberation of Palestine from the River [Jordan] to the [Mediterranean] Sea.

2. Through their act of jihad, our mujahidin are confirming that the agreements of humiliation and submission are not binding on any of our mujahidin and that they will not stop the continuity of Jihad. The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine will continue to march along the path it has chosen, as if no agreement has been signed with the occupation authorities. This is because such agreements do not represent our people or reflect their will.

3. This is the practical and real reply to the Zionist practices against our people in Jerusalem where the occupation authorities seek to expel our people from their houses, and exercise the policy of ethnic cleansing against them to transform Jerusalem into a purely Jewish city. In light of this Zionist sectarianism, weapons are the only language of dialogue.

4. This is our method to avenge our people in al-Khidr village, in all of Palestine, and on all the Palestinian lands that the Rabin gangs confiscate from their owners who have lived on these lands for thousands of years and which have become saturated with their blood and sweat and the purity of their faith to expand the settlements and house strangers from the four corners of the world.

5. This operation takes place within the context of the sacred vengeance for the souls of our pure martyrs in the Islamic Jihad Movement and Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], all the resistance martyrs, and martyr leader Hani 'Abid.

6. This operation is a greeting from the Mujahid Islamic Forces- Qasam to the hero prisoners and detainees who wage the battle of challenge and pride in the Zionist occupation prisons, with at their head struggler 'Itaf 'Ulayyan.

7. We warn the self-rule authority against harming our strugglers or cooperating with the occupation authorities to pursue our mujahidin. On this occasion, we stress that our mujahidin will not put down their weapons. They

will not put down their weapons under any pressure. We will continue to brandish our weapons to liberate the sacred homeland.

8. We regret the statements that are issued by the symbols of the self-rule authority who hasten to denounce the Jihad operations and voice their deep regret over the killing of the Zionists while their hands do not tremble in anger when they shake hands with the killers. [5-second break in transmission] our people that the fire will continue and we will continue to stalk the Zionists until the last of the foundlings departs from our sacred homeland. More martyrs means more happiness and more victories. It is a Jihad for victory or martyrdom. Long live Palestine from the sea to the river. Victory to the righteous mujahiddin.

[Signed] The Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, Jerusalem, 21 Sha'ban 1415 Hegira corresponding to 22 January 1995

Rabin Holds News Conference

TA2201120095 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1104 GMT 22 Jan 95

[News conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the Bet Lid junction—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rabin] I have no words to describe the murderous horror that took place here this morning and that harmed mostly soldiers, but also civilians. The attack was perpetrated by a maniacal terrorist organization which has no scruples and which is willing to perpetrate indiscriminate murderous attacks against Israelis—apparently by using a suicide terrorist.

The number of casualties is still being determined, so I cannot provide an accurate number. It is clear, however, that slightly more than 14 or 15 people were killed. To the best of our knowledge, approximately 56 people were wounded.

The attack was carried out by two explosions, one occurring near the eastern wall of the kiosk. The other—which came two or three minutes later—was apparently carried out by a suicide terrorist who blew himself up near a group of soldiers who were chasing him.

This suicide attack was apparently perpetrated by one of the extremist Muslim organizations, apparently Islamic Jihad. I must emphasize that this is all initial information.

It goes without saying that this is a terrible attack, apparently perpetrated by a suicide terrorist. We already know that suicide attacks have caused most of our casualties. We also know how difficult it is to handle those who are willing to commit suicide attacks with the sole intention of killing Israelis by carrying explosives on their bodies or by driving cars into bus stations or buses. We did not encounter this is a type of terrorism until two or three years ago, except for in Lebanon, and we will have to find a way to cope with this terrible form of terrorism.

This area, where buses unload soldiers Sunday and Friday mornings, is guarded by a special unit. Some 16 or 18 soldiers were deployed on this site to safeguard in-transit soldiers returning from home leave and going to their bases. It is not inconceivable that many of the soldiers from this unit were wounded.

I have called a special cabinet session for 1900 tonight [1700 GMT]; hopefully by then we will know more. Special information centers have been opened at the hospitals so that families can find out the names of the wounded. At the same time the army and police will pass on information about the casualties, after they are identified according to army regulations. Apparently one civilian, and maybe more, were killed. At this point I cannot say anything certain.

I have no doubt that the extremist Muslim organizations stand behind this attack—apparently the Islamic Jihad. Undoubtedly, their main intention is primarily to murder Israelis—preferably soldiers. Their political intention is clear: To disrupt and foil any chances of progress toward peace.

This is a terrible and painful day, certainly for all the families who still do not know for certain they have lost their dear ones; for the families whose sons and daughters were wounded; and certainly for the Israeli public and every member of the world community who still values human life and deplores indiscriminate terrorism perpetrated for political reasons. This is all I can say at this stage.

[Qol Yisra'el correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i] Mr. Prime Minister, how can civilian traffic routes, particularly bus stops which serve soldiers on Sunday mornings, be made safer?

[Rabin] I reiterate: Most bus stops used by soldiers on their way back to base are guarded by military units. One of the things we may have to conclude is that policemen should also be put on this force, because policemen are better equipped to prevent people from coming too close and to check civilians. Soldiers have limited powers on sovereign Israeli territory. One of the lessons we have learned is that all bus stops used by particularly great numbers of soldiers on Fridays and Sunday mornings should be fully listed and appropriate ways found to guard them. This, in addition to action against radical Islamic terrorist organizations—the Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. We are still unable to state with any degree of certainty what organization the perpetrator belonged to, but I would not be surprised if it came about that he was from Judaea and Samaria—territories still under our control, where the security forces and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] have freedom of action within the law.

[Israel Television Channel 1's Menashe Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, someone has suggested a ban on vehicular traffic from the territories, in order to prevent the entry of cars such as the one that exploded here today.

[Rabin] All the information we have indicates there was no car bomb. Unless we learn that it was a suicide attack, we view it as an attack by someone who was, in one way or another, carrying an explosive charge on his body or in his hands.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, what immediate steps does the government plan against the Islamic Jihad and Hamas?

[Rabin] The war against the Islamic Jihad and Hamas, who send suicide attackers, is an ongoing endeavor. Many hundreds of Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists have been detained in areas under our jurisdiction. They have not been granted permits to exit either Gaza or Judaea and Samaria into Israeli territory. Nevertheless, those who are familiar with the geographic situation and Judaea and Samaria's proximity to Bet Lid, for instance, will realize that a suicide attacker or a determined terrorist can make it from there.

Had you asked me about medium- and long-term actions, I would tell you we need to reach a separation, a situation in which Palestinian residents of the territories will not enter the sovereign territory of Israel. If we could attain that, the threat of such events on sovereign Israeli territory would lessen, although I am not saying we could totally eliminate the infiltration of a person willing to commit suicide. There is no deterrence of people willing to commit suicide, because they are willing to die, and no penalty is more severe than the death penalty.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, President Weizman has said the present political situation cannot continue, and he urged you to convene the top defense echelons. What do you plan to do?

[Rabin] I will not address the president's remarks now. I will have an opportunity to talk to him later. I am not going to say anything concerning the president's remarks.

Peres Reacts to Attack

TA2201165595 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondents Udi Segal and Razi Barqay; place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Segal] Foreign Minister Peres, this morning there was another grave suicide attack. Many people are asking themselves what good the Oslo agreement and the peace are if this is the price we have to pay for it.

[Peres] This attack has nothing to do with the Oslo agreement and is not the price of this agreement. We have here a new operational problem, just as occasionally there are new diseases that demand many victims until the appropriate medicine is discovered. Even at this painful moment, when we are all grief stricken, we must ask what the problem is: whether it is political or operational, whether the great number of casualties in this grave attack are an outcome of our policy or result from a suicide attack. I believe our efforts must be directed in the right direction and toward the right solution. This is a phenomenon of suicide terrorists, and it is very difficult to find a solution to this problem at the present time.

[Barqay] Mr. Peres, when you signed the Oslo agreement, the Cairo agreement, and the other ensuing agreements the greatest message you and Yitzhaq Rabin relayed to the public is that Israelis will henceforth enjoy greater personal security. It now transpires, however, that since these agreements our security has only been undermined.

[Peres] Yes, there is a paradox here, because the number of attacks has decreased while the number of casualties has increased. The political outcome is perhaps to be seen in the decrease in the number of attacks, but we must confront this new operational phenomenon.

[Barqay] Mr. Foreign Minister, what will you tell Israelis who feel that their personal security has been undermined over the last year?

[Peres] First, I will tell them the truth without any affectation. I will not tell them that if we surrender to the terrorists by halting the Oslo process all our problems will be solved. On the contrary, they will only be exacerbated and become much graver. Even at this difficult moment I am unwilling to look for excuses. We are confronting a grave and real problem, but it is more operational in nature than political. We must concentrate on doing what is important rather than doing anything for appearances' sake.

[Barqay] Does this mean that the negotiations with 'Arafat will continue as though there were no terrorism and that the struggle against terrorism will continue as though there were no 'Arafat?

[Peres] Yes. First, let us thank God that we got out of Gaza. I am not familiar with any political party that recommends that we return to Gaza. I believe that the main problem in Judaea and Samaria is not the existence or removal of the settlements. The main problem is how to attain new relationships between the Israeli citizens and the Palestinian population. Even if there are 130,000 settlers and 1,300,000 Palestinians, every child realizes the relations between them cannot be solved by erecting wire fences, by swords and guns. This is precisely what we are trying to do: to contend with a complicated situation—which has been unnecessarily complicated even further—in order that everyone residing in this area may live in peace and security.

[Segal] The prime minister said today that over the long term he sees the solution in terms of a separation. The Oslo agreement, on the other hand, sees the solution in terms of an intermixing of the populations. How can we achieve security within the framework of the Oslo concept?

[Peres] Oslo does not speak about an intermingling of populations. Oslo relates to the situation on the ground. A new and very grave situation has been created on the ground, and I have heard no proposal on how to solve this problem. What should we do? Only wire fences, knifes, and guns?

[Segal] If the solution is in terms of separation, is it not preferable to proceed toward this solution, namely to proceed directly toward the permanent solution now rather than dragging on with the interim arrangement which is demanding such a heavy toll in human lives?

[Peres] No, we have still not reached the stage for the permanent solution, because this solution mainly deals with Jerusalem, and the practical outcome would be a profound crisis without any results. We decided to postpone the Jerusalem issue until the final stage of the negotiations, because from our viewpoint Jerusalem is a political given and we are in no rush: Jerusalem is the united capital of Israel; we will not redivide it and will not make it a capital of two countries.

[Barqay] Mr. Peres, the Council for Peace and Security—a Labor-affiliated body—says that if Yasir 'Arafat really wants to prove to us that he is fighting against these Muslim organizations he must immediately outlaw Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad. On the basis of intelligence sources, to what extent is Yasir 'Arafat fighting these people? Is he merely turning a blind eye?

[Peres] Look, we too cannot score a perfect victory in this struggle. Even before the Oslo agreement we unfortunately had a lot of casualties. As you will recall, even when all our army was in Lebanon, more than 600 Israeli soldiers were killed. This is not a simple matter. We demand of 'Arafat, however, that he do whatever he can to prevent the operation of Islamic Jihad and Hamas. He claims that he is implementing measures. Recently the Palestinian side has indeed implemented some more measures against terrorism. We will continue to demand that they make a supreme and comprehensive effort.

[Barqay] So you do not recommend suspending the talks with 'Arafat at this stage?

[Peres] I propose that we do not surrender to those who want to harm peace so as not to hand out prizes to these suicide terrorists. Suppose we suspend the talks; how will the international community react? What kind of impression will it make abroad? People will say that we are surrendering to terrorism.

[Barqay] President Weizman today twice recommended that you and Yitzhaq Rabin proceed to an national emergency government. Do you accept this proposal?

[Peres] Look, I do not want to discuss this issue now. I have a lot of respect for what the president says, but this is not the right time to discuss this issue.

[Segal] Do you reject the idea of a national unity government?

[Peres] I have never rejected the option of a national unity government, as long as there is a clear policy. We need to save the country, not merely the Israeli parties, and this means implementing a policy that will ensure us a future of security and peace. Today 4.4 million Jews and 3.5 non-Jews live in this area. If we are not careful we could lose our majority or alternatively any chances for peace in the future. We must avoid two things: One is becoming like Lebanon; the other is becoming like Bosnia. This is what we are trying to do. The only thing we are giving up here is more disasters for Israel. In my opinion we conceded nothing by leaving Gaza; we did a great service to the Israeli public, its army, and its youth. It is a fact that nobody is proposing we reenter it.

President Calls For Suspension of Talks

TA2201191995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1730 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Interview with President 'Ezer Weizman by correspondent Hayim Yavin at the president's residence in Jerusalem on 22 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Yavin] In a special interview with MABAT, President Weizman calls for suspending the talks with the Palestinians and making what he calls a serious reassessment. I spoke with President Weizman this evening, and he might meet with Prime Minister Rabin if the latter requests it.

Today was one of the toughest days in the history of the state. You visited the wounded. How would you sum up the day?

[Weizman] I summed it up before I saw the wounded. I found it my duty to see the wounded. The condition of some is not too good, but I did it. It is a very serious attack. It is serious because it is an ongoing process; it is not the first attack. It comes in the midst of a process of talks on our future with the Palestinians and perhaps also with the Syrians. We signed an agreement with 'Arafat as leader of the Palestinians. In my view, we now have to suspend the talks and tell him: Sir, make a greater effort, and if you cannot, then we have to convene our best minds, from the two major camps in the coalition and the opposition and anybody else who can contribute—including security people, of course—and consider where we are going, because one thing is certain: You make peace with an enemy, but you have to make peace also with the State of Israel, with the Israelis. I think I am not exaggerating when I say that the tension, mood, and feelings among Israelis are bad.

I visited Qiryat Gat today and addressed 600 11th and 12th graders—a good crowd. The questions were very tough. It is true that we have undergone no less tough times. During my term as defense minister terrorists blew up the bus on the coastal road, but we reacted by entering Lebanon and carried out the Litani Operation, which created the security zone. The situation is now more complicated. Therefore, we have to put the best minds together to consider where we are going.

[Yavin] Only on security matters?

[Weizman] Talks on security and political issues, because we must come to those with whom we signed a peace agreement—and I do not want to talk about the prizes received—and say it is not working. It is true that you can say 'Arafat is in Gaza and cannot control what is happening in Nabulus. Nevertheless, if he does not have influence on the Palestinian issue, then he might not be the right person. Without fanfare, we have to suspend the talks until further notice and seriously reassess things. I know that what I am saying is tough. Since it comes from me, the significance is greater.

The same goes for the Syrian situation. We have to tell Mr. al- Asad, who sometimes does us a favor by simply talking to us: There are all sorts of leaders and all sorts of organizations within your jurisdiction who are proud of what they are doing. Sir, before we finalize things we want to see better control of the situation.

[Yavin] Will the suspension of the talks not play into the hands of the Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and achieve precisely what they want?

[Weizman] First of all, they have already torpedoed several things. Every process is like a battle. We are in the midst of the battle for peace. In battle you prepare a plan, work out an axis along which you move, and when you reach a mine field, you stop, take a detour, dismantle the mines, and think. The same is true in this case. You do not say: I am for peace whatever happens. Even in war, you do not go through fire. You act with wisdom and tactics, based on developments on the battlefield. [passage omitted]

[Yavin] By suspending the talks, we might find ourselves once again facing the entire PLO as the enemy.

[Weizman] I do not know whom I am facing now. I believe 'Arafat has a deep interest in the continuation of the talks and in additional achievements, but I think he himself knows that it cannot go on like this. The prime minister and the Israeli Government must hold things up, stop, look around, think, decide, and then move on.

[Yavin] Will you make your thoughts clear to the prime minister in a meeting tonight?

[Weizman] I have already made them clear by phone. If we meet tonight—I am not pressuring him; he is much busier than I am and has greater responsibilities—I will make it clear to him once again.

[Yavin] Did you get the impression that he supports your opinion?

[Weizman] That is between us.

[Yavin] What is the new security situation that we are facing?

[Weizman] I will not go into the technicalities of how we can prevent something like that. It is undoubtedly very difficult. I go back to my period as defense minister and the coastal-road bus attack—I always prefer to give examples from periods when I had responsibility. We decided on a military action that is not applicable today, but we have to consider perhaps doing something similar. We cannot let it go unnoticed and say—which is in fact what is being said—what do you want from him, he is in Gaza and we control the area? We, however, thought that in a settlement, 'Arafat will have better control of his forces because of his interest in ending this tough war. Not only has it not ended, it is becoming worse. That must be stopped. If it cannot be achieved through a military operation, it must be stopped in a political move. We always said that a political process will stop terrorism; therefore, by stopping the political process, we might also make those on the other side who want to stop terrorism rethink.

Security Believes Hamas Involved

TA2301111695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Jan 95 p A6

[Report by Eytan Rabin and Ori Nir]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Defense establishment sources yesterday expressed the assessment that although the Islamic Jihad had assumed responsibility for the terrorist attack at the Bet Lid junction, there was reason to suspect that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members were involved in its planning.

The sources asserted that the complex nature of the attack would have necessitated cooperation in deploying, studying the area, obtaining assistance from numerous accomplices, and preparing the sophisticated explosive charge. The sources added that the modus operandi of Yahya 'Ayyash, the "engineer" was clearly discernible in the explosion. [passage omitted]

The assessment of the security forces is that 'Ayyash volunteers his great experience in explosives and cooperates with members of the Islamic Jihad. There is a possibility that 'Ayyash has established links with Islamic Jihad members through a wide network of underlings which he has carefully compartmentalized in order to avoid capture.

Although the defense establishment sources note that 'Ayyash's capture will not reduce the motivation of desperate youths to carry out suicide attacks, they are convinced that it would diminish the terrorists' capability to cause large numbers of casualties in their suicide attacks. The sources say that it will take the terrorists a long time to find someone who can prepare bombs as powerful and efficient as those produced by "the engineer."

Radio Reports 'Arafat Condemnation of Attack

TA2201092495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Eight to 10 people have been killed and dozens have been wounded in the Bet Lid explosion. [Reporting from the prime minister's bureau on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0905 GMT on 22 January, political correspondent Shlomo Raz says the cabinet has been advised that "11 people were killed in the explosion."]

Hospitals have received 45 wounded so far, including numerous casualties with serious injuries. Searches of the area continue, and the public is urged to stay away from the site and to travel using alternate routes.

It is still unclear whether the explosion was caused by a car bomb or a suicide terrorist who was carrying an explosive charge on his body. [passage omitted]

After the cabinet was briefed on the terrorist attack, the heads of the security branches left the meeting. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin also left the meeting to follow the emergency services' work from his office. He then returned to the meeting.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the cabinet is now listening to a report by the construction and housing minister report on a construction plan for the territories.

The Labor Central Committee conference scheduled to be held at Bet Berl this afternoon has been canceled in the wake of the terrorist attack, and following consultations between the prime minister and the Labor secretary general.

Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi has issued a statement on behalf of 'Arafat condemning the terrorist attack. He told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that 'Arafat sends his condolences to the bereaved families, wishes a speedy recovery to the wounded, and stresses that all the sides have to prevent the enemies of peace from murdering the political process.

Cabinet Decides on 'Total Closure'

TA2201191695 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1850 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Report by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem]

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet meeting has been going on for about two hours now, and at this stage we can at least tell about one decision that was unanimously adopted. It was proposed by the prime minister and accepted by all other ministers: At Rabin's request, it was decided to close down the territories totally, as of tonight, for everyone, including those who have an exit permit to Israel. The closure will be in effect for the coming days until ways are worked out to fight this repetitive phenomenon of suicides. This is the first decision then of a total closure of the territories. The meeting is continuing; it may last another hour or two, and it is dealing with additional operational measures. It was also reported that the police minister asked that a considerable number of policemen be added to the police and Border Police so that the long border between Israel and the Judaea and Samaria areas can be closed down effectively.

Cabinet Decides Peace Process To Continue

TA2201214395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2110 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Interview with Education and Culture Minister Amnon Rubinstein by political correspondent Shlomo Raz outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Raz] The cabinet meeting has just ended. In addition to the closure, Minister Amnon Rubinstein, what else has the cabinet decided in view of this last terrorist attack?

[Rubinstein] The cabinet also decided to freeze all discussions and handling of the release of prisoners, as well as to freeze the issue of safe passage between Gaza and Jericho. Several proposals were raised as to how to increase security and how to bring about greater separation between the territories and Israel. These issues will be discussed in future cabinet meetings. The discussion was in the shadow of this very heavy disaster, of this criminal murder, naturally, but we adopted these three moves, and will continue to discuss additional moves. It was also decided that the issue of security will be at the top of the agenda of the talks with the Palestinian Authority, with 'Arafat, and he will be required to give an unequivocal answer, especially if it transpires that these suicide murderers arrived from Gaza.

[Raz] I understand then that the political process will continue, although, as noted, a closure will be imposed on the territories. Incidentally, is there a timeframe for the closure?

[Rubinstein] No time framework was determined. The closure will last a few days in the meantime. The prime minister defined it as a freeze on entry, not a closure. Later, we will discuss it anew, in light of the information we receive from the intelligence branches. Still, my personal position is that a closure of a few days is not enough as part of the way leading to an increasing separation between the territories and Israel. I have long supported a solution of problems within Gaza, within the territories, and the imposition of a closure by delineating a border or putting up border blocks, with supervision over entering vehicles. This position was shared by several ministers.

Ministers Comment on Attack

TA2201122895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At midday today, responsibility for the terrorist outrage at Bet Lid was claimed by an anonymous telephone caller on behalf of the Islamic Jihad terrorist organization. The call was made to the French news agency in Gaza.

Sources in Gaza said that Islamic Jihad activists had gone into hiding. The Palestinian Police is reportedly ready to carry out mass arrests among Islamic Jihad activists, and the police said they would crack down hard on the fundamentalist organization.

The weekly cabinet meeting was in session when ministers got word on the Bet Lid bombing. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Police Minister Moshe Shahal, and the chief of staff left the Prime Minister's Bureau in Jerusalem for the scene of the attack. This, not before they approved a ministerial committee to oversee building at communities surrounding Jerusalem. Miryam Herschlag reports:

[Begin recording] [Herschlag] Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer expressed his shock:

[Ben-Eli'ezer] [passage omitted] Well, I do not think that it is possible just to close the eyes and say this is the price. This cannot be the daily price. I think that we have to discuss with the Palestinians in a very thorough way what happened, how they can prevent such actions like this because it had definitely happened....

[Herschlag, interrupting] Do you see it as the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I do not want to say responsibility. If this came from Gaza, definitely it is their responsibility. If this did not come from Gaza, I think that we have just to go and reconsider all what we have decided so far.

[Herschlag] Meretz Minister Yosi Sarid said the peace talks should go on even if it does become clear that the attack at Bet Lid was launched from the Gaza Strip.

[Sarid] It is very difficult to stop a terrorist coming to commit suicide, to plant a bomb, or whatever. The security branches are doing their utmost, but even the best security branches cannot prevent all kinds of terrorist attacks, and such a kind in particular. I believe that nobody is willing to admit the fact that a terrorist will decide our fate and future here in the region, and our relations with our neighbors.

[Herschlag] But the government's newest minister, Gonen Segev, took a hard line on the question of continued peace talks.

[Segev] If the terrorist came from Gaza Strip or from Jericho, I think that we have to stop the contact with Yasir 'Arafat until he brings us a program how to stop this terrorism from now on. We cannot continue with the peace process and every month we go to bury so many citizens of Israel.

[Herschlag] But you are in a minority in the government on that issue, so the peace process will go ahead?

[Segev] I am not sure because I saw at least that most of the ministers really got shocked when they heard about this terrorist attack.

[Herschlag] Before the attack overshadowed all else, top on the government agenda had been the appointment of a ministerial committee to oversee building at the Jerusalem satellite communities of Ma'ale Adumim, Betar, and Giv'at Ze'ev. [passage omitted]

[Segev] Actually, I do not think that we will see any change in the building in Jerusalem and around it, and even in Judaea and Samaria.

[Herschlag] Housing Minister Ben-Eli'ezer agreed.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] Let's wait until the ministerial committee will take place and I can assure you one thing: I will continue to do all my best to convince my colleagues in the government that the only thing that we have to do is to continue to reinforce the defense of the capital of Israel.

[Herschlag] Ben-Eli'ezer also denied the claim by Palestinian Authority official Abu-'Ala' that the government had promised to fence off Jewish settlements in the territories. [end recording]

The cabinet will reconvene this evening at 6 o'clock [1600 GMT] in an emergency session.

Opposition, Arabs Comment

TA2201123695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Likud parliamentary faction said the Rabin government is a weak government which had given in to terror and encouraged it because it did not declare a war to the bitter end against it. A call to bring down the Rabin government was made this morning at a meeting of opposition leaders that convened in the town of Ma'ale Adumim originally to work out plans to contest the building freeze.

Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan said the current administration should know: Future governments would not keep its decisions, just at it had not done so.

Yig'al Bibi of the National Religious Party [NRP] said the opposition should call on the nation to rise up against the Rabin government.

In more reactions, the NRP has called on the government to resign and call new elections. Tzomet said the attack was a reminder of what would happen if the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] left the centers of towns in the

West Bank. Moledet said the only solution was total separation, and no more giving in to terrorism.

President 'Ezer Weizman has called for a reassessment of the way in which Israel is fighting terrorism. He called on the government to convene an urgent session of everyone involved in security, including members of the opposition, to work out ways of tackling the escalating wave of terror.

The attack was condemned by members of Israel's Arab community. The head of the Islamic Movement, Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, called on the prime minister to act for an immediate separation of the two peoples. A statement from the organizations of Arab municipal councils in Israel issued its own condemnation, denouncing the attack on innocent people.

Deputy Agriculture Minister Walid Sadiq said the attack did nothing to serve the interests of the Palestinian people. They should, he said, throw out terrorists who did deeds of this kind. Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah who also condemned the attack, said the answer was to speed up the peace process without delay.

Cabinet on Plan for 'Boosting' Jerusalem Construction

TA2201205795 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1730 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Nitzan Hen video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today's cabinet decision on the establishment of a ministerial committee to supervise construction in the territories was a compromise move between the Meretz ministers' position and that of the construction and housing minister. The Meretz ministers demanded that construction in the territories, including the satellite towns around Jerusalem, be totally frozen, but the construction and housing minister submitted to the government a comprehensive plan for the construction of about 4,000 housing units around the capital. Still, the decision on a ministerial committee was made after the government approved a draft proposal which states that priority will be given to boosting the construction of Jerusalem. Our settlement affairs correspondent Nitzan Hen reports:

[Begin recording] [Hen] Cabinet ministers this morning believed that they were facing one of the most fateful decisions of the Rabin government: Will settlement in the territories continue or stop? Outside the meeting hall there were demonstrators who took care to remind the ministers that the battle over Jerusalem has begun. The demonstrators called on the government not to freeze construction, not in Judaea and Samaria, nor in the Jerusalem area. The police detained several female demonstrators as well as two council leaders. [passage omitted]

When reports about the terrorist attack began flowing in, moods outside as well as inside the meeting hall calmed down. The cabinet meeting was shortened, and a compromise proposal was adopted very quickly: no freeze, but a committee instead. [passage omitted]

The government decided to set up a ministerial committee to supervise construction in the territories, including those referred to as the Greater Jerusalem. Seven ministers abstained, including three from Meretz and Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer. Still, everybody found that the decision to set up a committee supported their positions.

[Meretz Minister Yosi Sarid] This decision puts all construction in the West Bank under control and supervision. This is what we wanted and achieved. [passage omitted]

[Hen] At the meeting, the construction and housing minister presented his overall plan of building about 5,000 [as heard] apartments in the belt of settlements surrounding Jerusalem: Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'at Ze'ev, Betar 'Ilit, and the 'Etzyon Bloc.

[Meretz Minister Shulamit Aloni] These are settlements in the occupied territory, subject to military rule, and they should be discussed differently.

[Hen] All the while, the heads of the Greater Jerusalem Forum anticipated a clear-cut government decision and were furious when they heard the decision. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Cabinet Issues Communique on Settlement Decisions

TA2201212095 Jerusalem Government Press Office in English 22 Jan 95

[Communique communicated by the Cabinet Secretariat]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At the weekly Cabinet meeting today (Sunday), 22.01.95:

1. Within the framework of the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs, the Cabinet was briefed by security officials on on-going matters. The Prime Minister praised IDF forces in the north for their war against terrorists. The Cabinet expressed its appreciation to the IDF, via the Chief-of-Staff. The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation to Maj.-Gen. Danny Rothschild, upon the conclusion of his tenure as Coordinator of Activities in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza, and upon his resignation from the IDF (at his request).

The Prime Minister made mention of Maj.-Gen. Rothschild's great contribution while in his post, expressing thanks in his and the Cabinet's name. During the course of the meeting, preliminary details of the fatal attack at the Bet Lid junction arrived.

2. The main part of the Cabinet meeting was devoted to the report of the Housing and Construction Minister on

construction in the Judaea and Samaria area. On this matter, the Cabinet decided as follows:

A) To view as a top priority, the strengthened construction of united Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Israel, for the welfare of all its residents, in accordance with the Basic Law: Jerusalem, Capital of Israel. The area of Jerusalem has been defined in Cabinet decision 577 of 26.6.67, according to the Law and Administration Order, and was issued in the Law and Administration Ordinance (No. 1) from 28.6.67.

The Cabinet will make efforts toward the development and prosperity of Jerusalem, and toward the welfare of all its residents, through the allocation of special resources. Jerusalem will also be given special preference in regard to the activities of Government authorities on economic and other matters.

B) To create a ministerial committee that will supervise the implementation of the sections included in this decision. Members of the ministerial committee will be: the Prime Minister, chairman; the Foreign Minister; the Finance Minister; the Housing and Construction Minister; the Justice Minister; and the Communications Minister.

The Attorney-General will participate in committee meetings. The ministerial committee will base its considerations and decisions on Cabinet decisions 360 (of 22.11.92) and 721 (of 24.1.93).

C) The expropriation of lands will be carried out for security needs and for the pavement of bypass roads only. The expropriation of lands will be carried out with the authorization of the ministerial committee.

D) The ministerial committee will approve, as necessary, Government investment in Israeli communities in Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, in public buildings and in vital infrastructures like kindergartens, schools, day-care centers, sidewalks, water, sewage, electricity, communications, clinics, sports facilities and synagogues.

E) The creation of housing units through budgeted construction in the areas of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip will be approved exclusively by the ministerial committee.

F) The ministerial committee will examine, as soon as possible, plans for the private construction of housing within Israeli communities that exist in the areas of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, while considering blueprints thus far approved and existing contractual construction obligations, as well as the Government's policy—so long as the infrastructure and construction do not involve any further expenditure from the State budget. Any public expenditure for the sake of infrastructure or construction will require the authorization of the ministerial committee.

G) The Cabinet will consider allocating public lands to Palestinians in their densely populated areas.

3. The Cabinet also decided to approve the proposed law on the implementation of the peace treaty between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1995.

4. The Cabinet approved the addition of Minister Gonen Segev to the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs.

5. The Cabinet approved the Immunities and Rights Law (international organizations and special delegations) (the 45th session of European regional WHO committee, 1995), 1995.

6. The Cabinet ratified an agreement with India on aerial transport.

Egyptian President Mubarak Visits in al-'Aqabah

King, Mubarak Meeting Previewed

JN2101082395 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Jan 95 pp 1, 7

[Unattributed article]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak are expected to meet at al-'Aqabah today for talks on bilateral relations, the Middle East peace process and the situation in the Arab World in general in the first visit of the Egyptian leader to Jordan after the Gulf crisis.

It was not immediately clear whether the al-'Aqabah talks were to be a preliminary meeting between the two leaders ahead of a Feb. 1 visit that President Mubarak was scheduled to make to the Kingdom. The Feb. 1 visit was agreed upon during talks Mr. Mubarak held with Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti in Cairo on Jan. 12.

Meanwhile, Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih was due in Damascus late Saturday and most probably in Jordan on Sunday, raising the prospect of a trilateral summit at al-'Aqabah. But analysts said it was unlikely.

If indeed such a summit takes place, then it would be the first among the three after the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, which saw Jordan and Yemen on what some Arab leaders perceived as the Iraqi side of the fence while Egypt was staunchly on the other.

The King's meeting with President Mubarak comes amid increasing calls from various Arab quarters emphasising the need to rally Arab ranks as the Middle East slowly moves towards Arab-Israeli peace.

It also comes prior to an expected visit to Jordan by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat for talks with King Husayn on Jordanian-Palestinian relations and issues related to the peace process.

Among the topics for discussion between the King and President Mubarak, who met last in July 1994 in Alexandria, Egypt, are Jordanian-Egyptian relations, the status of the Middle East peace process and efforts to heal the inter-Arab differences left behind by the Gulf crisis.

Egypt recently criticised Jordan for signing the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel without Syria and Lebanon arriving at a similar accord with the Jewish state. A further strain appeared after Egypt played a key role in excluding any reference to Jordan's role in Jerusalem while including a reference to Saudi Arabia in a resolution adopted by the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Morocco in December.

Since then, however, relations appear to have improved considerably after Mr. al-Kabariti's visit to Cairo nine days ago. In addition to arranging a Mubarak visit to Jordan and coordinating positions at the OIC's Jerusalem Committee meetings in Morocco last week, Mr. al-Kabariti also paved the way for reviving the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee—a key body that used to chart relations in all areas prior to the strain caused by the Gulf crisis.

In addition to seeking means to consolidate relations and clear the Arab atmosphere, President Mubarak is also likely to raise the status of Egyptian-Israeli relations in the wider context of regional disarmament.

It was likely that President Mubarak, who is embroiled in a row with Israel over the Jewish state's nuclear weapons programme and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, might seek Jordanian support for his stand that Egypt would sign the NPT only if Israel also does so when the document comes up for renewal in April.

Also expected to be discussed by King Husayn and Mr. Mubarak are Jordanian-Syrian relations, described as "quiet" in the wake of Syria criticism of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' was in Cairo late Friday for a brief visit and talks with President Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa expected Israeli dispute and developments in the Arab world.

Husayn Receives Mubarak

JN2101121595 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn received His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, upon his arrival at al-'Aqabah Airport at noon today on a short working visit during which the two great leaders will hold talks on bilateral relations between the sisterly countries and the ways to promote them. They will also discuss the stages the peace process has passed through in the region and the achievements made on all tracks.

Discussions between the two leaders will also deal with the current Arab situation and the need to rebuild Arab cohesion and solidarity, shape a new phase of inter-Arab relations, and rectify their course in a manner that will realize the interests of the Arab nation and meet the aspirations of their peoples under the current international circumstances. They will also review the roles of all parties in confronting the challenges of the forthcoming phase, the post-peace phase.

The two big leaders will also discuss the impact of the Gulf war on inter-Arab relations and the need to surmount its repercussions and the dilemma into which it has dragged the nation. [passage omitted]

His excellency the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt is accompanied on his visit by an official delegation including Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Information Minister Dr. Safwat al-Sharif; Economy Minister Dr.

Mahmud Muhammad Mahmud; Dr. 'Usamah al-Baz, director of the president's office ambassador in Amman; and a number of ranking Egyptian officials.

King, Mubarak Hold Closed Meeting

JN2101132495 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak held a closed meeting at the Royal Palace in al-'Aqabah at noon today, immediately after his excellency's arrival in al-'Aqabah. [passage omitted]

King, Mubarak Hold News Conference

JN2101144095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn has emphasized that Jordan and Egypt are jointly seeking steps leading to a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

In a statement to journalists following the talks he held with His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, at the royal palace in al-'Aqabah at noon today, his majesty expressed his thanks to President Mubarak for making this chance available in order to discuss all the topical issues on bilateral and Arab levels, and issues related to the region as a whole.

His majesty said Jordanian-Egyptian relations will return to what they were in terms of cooperation, coordination, and joint action, with the aim of realizing progress in this nation and in the service of the same future, to which the next generations have a right.

His majesty added it was agreed to resort to frankness and a fraternal spirit, and to continue contacts in Amman and Cairo on all levels. His majesty said the future will bring all that is good, God willing.

For his part, His Excellency President Mubarak thanked His Majesty King Husayn for the warm hospitality received from his majesty. He said he agreed with His Majesty King Husayn about continuing cooperation in various fields in the interest of the two fraternal countries and peoples.

His Majesty King Husayn saw off His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, upon his departure at al-'Aqabah Airport this afternoon at the end of a short working visit during which the two leaders held talks on bilateral fraternal relations in all fields and ways of bolstering and developing them.

During the talks, Jordan emphasized the constants of its position on the peace process and its efforts aimed to realize just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region.

Further on News Conference

JN2101183095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Jan 95

[Report on news conference by King Husayn and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak with unidentified correspondents in al-'Aqabah on 21 January—italicized passages recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn saw off His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, upon his departure from al-'Aqabah Airport this afternoon at the end of a short working visit during which the two leaders held talks on fraternal bilateral relations in all fields and ways of bolstering and developing them. [passage omitted]

Following the talks, His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak held a brief news conference at the royal palace in which they emphasized the eagerness of the sisterly states to develop and enhance bilateral relations in all fields and activate their mechanism.

His majesty said:

[Husayn] *I am very happy because my big and dear brother His Excellency President Muabrak gave me this chance to welcome him in his second homeland and in this place where we have met several times in the past. He is among his kinsfolk and brothers. The chance was made available by his excellency to discuss all topical issues on the bilateral and Arab levels, covering the region as whole. We are jointly aspiring for the continuation of steps toward a just and comprehensive peace in this region. As for ourselves, our relations will return to what they were and be even stronger, God willing, in terms of cooperation, coordination, and joint action for the progress of this nation and for the promising future, to which the next generations have a right. We have agreed to resort to frankness, to which we had resorted in the past, and in a fraternal spirit of which we are proud. We also agreed to remain in continuou contacts, here and in beloved Egypt, and to encourage the continuation of these contacts on all levels. God willing, the future will be good. Once again, I am indebted to him because he is always in the forefront. I am glad because he gave us the chance to meet., Hopefully, continuous meetings will take place, God willing. Thank you, Mr. President.*

Then His Excellency Husni Mubarak spoke:

[Mubarak] *Thank you, your majesty, my brother. I am grateful for the warm hospitality, which we have been used to for a long time. Concerning my visit to al- 'Aqabah today, I want to say he visited us in Egypt three times in the past, so I had to come here. I came to al-'Aqabah in particular to keep away from formalities so we can sit in the fraternal atmosphere to which we have been accustomed for a long time. We will continue to cooperate in various fields in the interests of the two countries and peoples. Thank you, your majesty.*

Then His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Husni Mubarak answered questions posed by journalists.

[Unidentified correspondent] *As a result of the al-'Aqabah meeting today, do you think relations have returned to their normal situation? Second, will the base of the Jordanian-Egyptian meeting be expanded to include other countries in the future?*

[Husayn] *As for us, we are brothers and our relations are old ones. Praise be to God, these relations are based on clarity and a certain desire by me and my brother his excellency the president to work together for the goodness and future of this nation. God willing, we will work together on the bilateral level. We hope all our nation will be united in the near future.*

[Mubarak] *There is nothing new against expanding relations to include more countries. This is something normal and will take place in the future, God willing.*

[Correspondent] *Your Excellency President Husni Mubarak, is this summit between you and his majesty the king held against the backdrop of Alexandria summit?*

[Mubarak] *The Alexandria summit looked at all the points mentioned in the Alexandria statement. We believe the Alexandria summit was held for the sake of the peace process and for Arab reconciliation. It was not held in retaliation for any other summit, as some may think. Thank you.*

Answering another question, the Egyptian president said:

[Mubarak] *You speak about Arab solidarity as if Arab solidarity has been perfect since the Arab League was established. Arab differences have always been present. If some Arab differences have increased at present, they represent a stage. We will eventually reach an Arab reconciliation, and I hope the wounds will be healed. Thank you.*

[Husayn] *Thank you Mr. President. In all circumstances, we have to work together." [passage omitted]*

Paper: 'Explosion' in Israel Aimed at Peace Process

JN2301090095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Jan 95 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "An Explosion Targeting the Peace Process"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Apart from emotions, yesterday's enormous explosion near Netanya can be described as another link in a chain of violence throughout the long history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which has witnessed many such bloody events as yesterday's.

There is no doubt that yesterday's operation, which killed and injured scores of Israelis, was aimed at stopping the peace process. It was also aimed at raising the greatest possible reaction in the Israeli street against Yitzhaq Rabin's government, which is demonstrating excessive sensitivity toward issues related to Israeli security.

Therefore, we must read the message carried by yesterday's explosion patiently and rationally. Perhaps this will deprive the enemies of peace from both sides of the opportunity to create more trouble, obstacles, and reactions that inevitably lead only to besiege and undermine the peace process.

Perhaps the initial reactions by all parties concerned about the future of the peace process, including the Palestinian National Authority, entail a deep awareness of the ultimate aim of this bloody explosion. It renewed the consensus among these parties of the need to continue the peace process as the only solution to confront this violence that is moving from one place to another.

As we realize the great bitterness and violent reactions caused to both parties by such operations, we call for giving peace a chance by keeping it away from the policies of repression, humiliation, and expansion and by making is the only way to break the vicious circle of violence and to suppress the mutual instincts of retaliation.

Palestinian Authority Delegation Arrives on Visit

Quray' Comments

JN2201132895 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian National Authority's [PNA] delegation arrived in Amman, via the King Husayn Bridge, this morning on a visit to Jordan that will last for several days.

Ahmad Quray', official in charge of economic affairs at the PNA and member of the delegation, said that this visit is aimed to prepare for Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Jordan, which will put all issues related to the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship in their proper and correct place and in a very clear manner so that this relationship can continue to have the same status it has had in the hearts of all Jordanian and Palestinian citizens.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, he added: We pin great hopes on the results this visit will produce on economic, financial, legal, and political issues. The extent of the interrelated and intertwined relations between Jordan and Palestine deserves such a degree of attention and care in order for us to build it hand by hand and shoulder by shoulder on a basis of frankness and clarity.

He said he believes that a host of agreements will be signed during the visit, thus further reassuring and pleasing both peoples and boosting and promoting this relationship. He said that the visit will open wide doors for the two countries' establishments in all fields so that they can start the process of building and promoting the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship.

He stressed that the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is unique and distinguished in word and deed given the type of links between Jordan and Palestine and the two peoples. He said: I believe that the future of this relationship will remain distinguished and cohesion will be further strengthened along constitutional lines. He also pointed out that the relationship between Jordan and Palestine should be safeguarded, promoted, and enhanced.

The Palestinian delegation comprises Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, official in charge of culture and arts; Yasir 'Amr, official in charge of education; Dr. 'Abd-al-Hafiz al-Ashhab, official in charge of post and telecommunications; Jamil al-Tarifi, head of the Palestinian side in the Palestinian-Israeli Security Hajj Ahmad, official in charge of transport; and Samir Hulaylah, assistant undersecretary for trade affairs.

Joint Talks Begin in Amman

JN2201205095 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordanian-Palestinian meetings have begun at the Foreign Ministry to prepare for a meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Palestinian National Authority, which will be held at the end of this week to put all issues of concern in their proper and correct place and in a very clear manner.

The Jordanian side of the talks was chaired by 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, deputy prime minister and minister of education, and attended by the minister of finance, the foreign minister, the minister of post and communications, the minister of transportation, the minister of trade and industry, the interior minister, the minister of agriculture, the minister of justice, and the minister of culture. The Palestinian side of these talks was chaired by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, official in charge of the information portfolio in the Palestinian Authority, and attended by officials in charge of the education, trade and economy, transportation, justice, and post and telecommunications portfolios and by the Palestinian charge d'affaires in Amman.

Following the talks, 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, deputy prime minister and minister of education, and Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, official in charge of the information portfolio in the PLO, spoke to our political affairs correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab and to reporters on issues discussed during this meeting:

[Begin recording] ['Abd-Rabbuh] We began by discussing issues related to organizing bilateral relations. We also discussed the general framework which will govern our relations in the next period. We also held talks on issues that deal with relations in various fields. These include economic fields and issues related to education, culture and information, and administrative issues. We agreed on forming subcommittees to formulate papers on joint action in these fields. These papers will be presented to the committee during its meeting tomorrow evening.

We hope that we will be able to arrive at practical formulas that meet the needs of citizens in both sisterly countries and that fulfill our joint objectives. We believe that the spirit which guides us will help us reach an agreement and an understanding on various issues. We hope to present his majesty the king and President Yasir 'Arafat with all these results during their upcoming meeting.

[Al-Rawabidah] We say that the citizen in both sisterly countries needs to see a real translation of this distinguished relationship and to see tangible reality. Therefore, we will not prejudge things. I can say that a brotherly atmosphere permeated the meeting, during which we tried to outline the features of a full cooperation and coordination agreement in all fields that will be translated into protocols of implementation in every field. This formula will be presented to His Majesty King Husayn and President Yasir 'Arafat for their approval in order to all brothers will wait for the results of our work during the next two days. [end recording]

Israeli Foreign Minister Expected To Visit Soon

JN2101101795 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Jan 95 pp 1, 7

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Natasha Bukhari]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will visit the Kingdom "as soon as possible" for talks with Jordanian officials on Jordan's position vis-a-vis the peace process in light of the latest developments on Jordanian-Arab relations, diplomatic sources said Friday.

The sources said that a recent telephone conversation between Mr. Peres and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan dealt with the Israeli minister's coming visit, bilateral relations and preparations for the economic summit the convening of which has been postponed from July to October pending sufficient support for the meeting which will be a follow-up to the Casablanca economic summit which was held in Morocco late last year.

Mr. Peres' expected visit comes after breakthroughs in Jordanian efforts to improve strained ties between the Kingdom and some Arab states as well as with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

A visit to Cairo on Jan. 12 by Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti resulted in arranging a summit meeting between Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and His Majesty King Husayn to take place here in the first week of February.

Also, intensive Jordanian-Palestinian contacts succeeded in containing the recent strain in Jordanian-Palestinian relations. The two sides have agreed to hold minister-level meetings on Sunday ahead of a visit to Amman by Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat on Jan. 25.

But Israel is "anxiously observing Jordan's moves towards mending ties with Arab states," said the sources, adding that the Jewish state "fears that these moves might undermine the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and both sides' pledge to establish warm peace between them."

They added that Tel Aviv was seeking assurance from Amman that Jordan's steps towards Arab reconciliation would not have any negative impact on Jordanian-Israeli relations.

The Oct. 26 peace accord calls for "establishing normal relations" between the two countries and their peoples, a clause, which according to Western diplomats here, might be threatened by the Kingdom's moves towards consolidating relations with other Arab states, especially Egypt, which continues to resist normalising relations with Israel 14 years after it signed a peace agreement with the Jewish state.

But official sources here say that Jordan's quest to join Arab ranks has no bearing on Jordanian-Israeli relations and that the Kingdom is only seeking to improve its relations with Arab countries so as to contribute in serving Arab interests in the march towards peace.

Israel's fears might stem from the fact that Jordan publicly endorsed the resolutions of the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi summit in Alexandria last month, which the Israelis considered threatening in light of the deadlock in Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

In that summit, the leaders of Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia pledged full support for Syria's position in peace talks with Israel. Damascus insists that no peace agreement between the two sides will be reached until Israel withdraws fully from the Golan Heights occupied in the 1967 war.

Jordan declared support for the Alexandria summit's resolutions as well as those adopted by the Jerusalem Committee of the Organisation of Islamic Conference's (OIC) meeting held in Efran last week.

The panel called on all Arab and Islamic countries to resist Israel's attempts to Judaise Jerusalem and reiterated the conviction that sovereignty over East Jerusalem should be for Arabs only and that political sovereignty over the Holy City should be for Palestinians, who see Jerusalem as the capital of a future independent Palestinian state.

"These stands by Jordan, coupled with the Kingdom's support for Egypt's demands that Israel should sign the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty when it comes up for extension in Geneva in April, may be worrying to Israel in that Jordan is altering its position regarding its relations with Israel," the sources said.

The sources also said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's visit to the Kingdom on Jan. 12 was prompted by the latest developments on inter-Arab moves towards improving Jordanian-Arab relations will not jeopardise Jordanian-Israeli relations.

King Phones al-Asad, Offers Condolences on Late Son

JN2001182095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Jan 95

[From the "Sixty Minutes Program"]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn today held a telephone call with his brother President Hafiz al-Asad of the Syrian Arab Republic, in which he offered his heartfelt condolences to President al-Asad and his family on the first anniversary of the passing away of his late son Basil al-Asad.

Al-Asad thanked His Majesty King Husayn and expressed his appreciation for his noble and brotherly feelings. He wished his majesty continued good health.

Hizballah Official Supports Anti-U.S. Actions

NC2101071495 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0640 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In their Friday sermons yesterday, preachers discussed Lebanese and regional developments and the situation in Chechnya. [passage omitted]

Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli [former Hizballah secretary general] said he supports any act against the Americans because they are working to kill Muslims in the world. He said the United States is the Muslims' primary enemy. It kills Muslims, supports the Zionists, and attacks the Islamic Republic of Iran. When we deal a blow to America, he said, we deal a blow to the head of the enemies, and this should be known by all believers.

He called on the kidnappers of the American officer [in Turkey] not to extend the ultimatum and not to harm the child, because killing children is not part of our ethics and principles. [passage omitted]

Islamic Leader: New U.S. Envoy 'Fiercest Enemy'

NC2101111595 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 13 Jan 95 p 6

[Report by Fawwaz Miqati in Tripoli]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Fathi Yakan, chairman of the Islamic Group's parliamentary bloc in Lebanon, has said that "American policy is always eager to do anything that pleases the Hebrew state, supports its policy, and solidifies its position."

He said that "the appointment of the new U.S. ambassador to Lebanon was made after painstaking efforts by the Zionist IAPAC [Israeli-American Public Affairs Committee] to get him appointed because he is the fiercest enemy of the Islamic resistance in the south, especially Hizballah." He added: "This is a precious gift the United States is presenting to Israel at a time when a Lebanese security delegation is visiting the United States to hold talks on different issues. This has confused our leading troika and has raised a thousand questions."

On another level, Yakan demanded that the city of Tripoli be given the necessary attention in terms of services.

Fadlallah Denies Supporting Kidnappings for Swap

NC2001175695 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has asked: Why does the United States not speak of human rights or the rights of the Lebanese detained in al-Khiyam prison? Fadlallah added that the resistance has upset the rules of the game.

He pointed out that he does not support kidnappings for a swap, in a reference to the abduction of a U.S. military officer and his son in Turkey by an organization that demands the release of Mustafa al-Dirani, who has been kidnapped by Israel.

Buwayz on Joint Security Committee With U.S.

JN2101080195 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0510 GMT 21 Jan 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by correspondent Yusuf Dakkash in Paris; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Dakkash] Your Excellency Minister Faris Buwayz, there is the issue of the Lebanese-U.S. Security Committee which is now in the limelight. It seems that this is a controversial issue in Lebanon, and some reports do not hesitate to say that the government might ignore it as it was not listed on the recent cabinet session agenda. This issue deals with the negotiations between Lebanon and the United States, called security negotiations, which are expected to start in Washington at the beginning of next month. Available information indicates that Lebanon seeks to confine the negotiations to the question of the restrictions imposed on the travel of U.S. citizens to Lebanon and that the United States wants to go beyond this to discuss the issue of security in general, Hizballah, or even the negotiations with Israel. What is the truth and what will be discussed?

[Buwayz] First of all, let us put certain things within their proper perspective on this issue. This issue is being given more attention than it deserves. Let us simplify matters. As you know, the United States took several measures during the Lebanese events. In the wake of these events and the reestablishment of the state, and the restoration of security and stability in Lebanon, these measures became unjustified and illogical from the security angle. Security in Lebanon is now similar to what is in most of the stable countries in the world. From this premise, I would like to say that, as a Lebanese state, we stopped discussing this issue. We did so because we believed that if it is used as a cover for political pressure, then we are not ready to mix political stands and this issue. If the issue is meant to result in economic pressure, then we do not believe that this issue can be used to bring pressure to bear on Lebanon in the economic field. But, if the United States wants to review these decisions or measures because it believes that something has changed, then we welcome such a step. If a dialogue on security will help to clarify some Lebanese matters, such as security, the crime statistics, the capability of the security forces to deal with attacks, then we do not object to this. Concerning the question of confining the tasks of this committee, you used an expression that says the confinement operation has started. I would like to affirm here that from the very first moment we explained that this committee has nothing to do with the discussion of any topic that we believe is connected to the peace process. We view the situation occupation as having to do with the peace negotiations and not with the security talks.

Buwayz, Hizballah Official React to Israeli 'Threats'

NC2201190395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] General Antoine Lahd's threat that Israel might take certain action in the south still draws a reaction from Lebanese officials.

Referring to this, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that Lahd's remarks are analytical, not a threat. He noted that Israel's attempts to destabilize the domestic situation in Lebanon will not serve the desired purpose. He added that Israel must be realistic about this matter. Buwayz was speaking at Beirut airport upon return from Morocco, where he took part in the Jerusalem Committee meetings.

[Begin Buwayz recording] I do not believe that what Lahd said was a threat as much as an analysis of existing reality. The reality is that for some time Israel has sought to destabilize the domestic situation. This is not the first time and might not be the last.

Hence, I believe that all the approaches pursued so far—Israeli oppression, either directly or through Lahd, or attempts to destabilize the internal situation—have not borne fruit. Israel's occupation of the south shows that the cost of this occupation has exceeded the cost of all the wars Israel has entered. It also proves that so long as there is occupation there will be resistance, one way or another. All the technology, warning systems, and sophisticated deterrence systems Israel uses have produced nothing so far. I believe that the Israelis should be realistic about this matter. [end recording]

Buwayz criticized the failure of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations to do their duties toward Lebanon. He said that Israel's impossible terms and stances are not compatible with the requirements of a just and all-embracing peace. He stressed that what is more important than signing peace agreements is what follows.

Buwayz noted that the Syrian-Lebanese summit meeting that was held yesterday was in the context of efforts to cope with regional developments. He said that there is nothing new on the U.S.-Lebanese Security Committee, repeating that its task is clear and accurate: To consider the safety of U.S. citizens and establishments in Lebanon.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan, deputy chairman of the Higher Shiite Islamic Council, called on the resistance to act from within and to avoid a Katyusha war from the liberated lands.

Hizballah Deputy Chairman Muhammad Funaysh said: If Israel tries to carry out its threats in the south once again, these threats will not pass unnoticed.

PFLP-GC Confirms Group Casualties in Attack

NC2101170495 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] confirmed today that six of its members were killed during an attack on an Israeli patrol in south Lebanon on 19 January.

A PFLP-GC statement said that two Israeli soldiers were wounded in the operation.

The statement announced that the dead PFLP-GC members were two Tunisian nationals, one of whom was the group commander, two Palestinians, and two Syrians.

The PFLP-GC statement was accompanied by a list of the names of the dead members and their photographs.

A previous toll issued by the Lahd forces [south Lebanese Army] said five PFLP-GC members were killed during that operation.

Al-Shar' Returns From Brief Visit to Cairo

JN2101071195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus last night after delivering a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. The message deals with regional issues and the latest developments in the peace process.

Talks during the meeting dealt with bilateral relations and issues of common concern.

Radio on Pelletreau Praise for Yemen-Saudi Mediation

JN2001180595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—Robert Pelletreau, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, has praised the efforts Syria exerted to contain the transient Saudi-Yemeni border dispute.

On the peace process, Pelletreau stressed, in a news conference he held at the premises of the International Press Club in Washington last night, that his country believes that Syria is keen on reaching a peace accord. At the same time, he denied that there were secret talks between Syria and Israel. He added that the U.S. administration is still receiving confirmations from both sides of their commitment to the peace talks.

In another development, Pelletreau called on the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world, noting that his country will work with other countries in order to prevent the proliferation of mass destruction weapons in the Middle East. He said that this [proliferation] will lead to a state of instability and that it is not in keeping with the efforts being exerted to spread peace on a larger scale in the area as a whole.

'Sources' on Mediation To Improve Saudi-Iranian Ties

NC2101124095 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 12 Jan 95 pp 1, 15

[Report by Hisham Milhim in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab diplomatic sources yesterday disclosed that Syria is indeed mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The sources said Saudi Arabia is now more interested in containing Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and improving its relations with Iran than in the Middle East peace process.

The sources said: "Yes, there is a Syrian mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, a mediation that Riyadh has welcomed. This was one of the things that encouraged King Fahd to attend the tripartite summit in Alexandria, along with Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad."

The sources added: "The initial information carried by (Syrian Foreign Minister) Faruq al-Shar' (in his latest visit to Saudi Arabia) was encouraging."

Al-Shar' visited Saudi Arabia Monday [9 January], a few days after a visit to Iran. He delivered President al-Asad's messages to Saudi King Fahd and Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The moves were made a few days after the Alexandria summit.

The sources said: "Saudi Arabia hopes the current problems Iran is facing will help control that country. The Saudis say they do not want things to get out of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's hands as he approaches the end of his term in office. They do not want the extremists in Iran to gain more influence and the Iranian leadership to increasingly feel that it is under siege and its military programs—the nuclear ones in particular—are being targeted by Israel and the United States, as this may encourage the extremists."

The sources added that Saudi Arabia is demanding that "Iran stop or reduce its support for extremist movements, not only in the Gulf, but also in other parts of the Islamic world." It is also demanding that "peaceful solutions be sought to Gulf crises, specifically the dispute over the three Arab islands."

The sources said that "the main reasons for King Fahd's participation in the tripartite summit are Iraq first, second, and third; Iran fourth; and the peace process fifth."

They added: "Riyadh is worried about Egypt's heightening sense of dismay and confusion over the decline of its regional role, and about Cairo's support for Iraq's return to the Arab world. This is what encouraged Fahd to participate in the summit."

The sources continued: "Fahd wanted to help al-Asad and attenuate Syria's indignation over the hastiness of some Gulf states, like Qatar and Oman, in normalizing their relations with Israel."

The sources repeatedly said that "what interests Riyadh in its relations with Syria at this stage is the special relationship between Damascus and Tehran and the role Syria can play in reducing tension between Riyadh and Tehran and in improving relations."

The sources stressed that "Saudi Arabia now believes that containing Saddam Husayn and improving Saudi-Iranian relations through Syria are much more important than the Arab-Israeli peace process."

Radio: Rabin Lacks 'Moral Courage' for 'Just Peace'

JN2001162095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1252 GMT 20 Jan 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli officials keep saying in their semi-daily statements that the chances of making progress on the Syrian track are diminishing as the electoral campaign for the next Knesset elections draws near. They say Syria is to blame for the slowness of the talks on this track because it insists on an explicit pledge from the Israeli Government to fully withdraw from the Golan.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres announces in this regard that the Israeli Government has not made such a pledge and that Syria should not link progress in the peace talks and full withdrawal from the Golan. In other words, Israel is asking Syria to stop adhering to the principle of full withdrawal while it insists that the required peace means normalizing relations, opening borders, and establishing regional cooperation. It is noteworthy that Israel, according to its Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, has frequently announced that it will not specify the extent of withdrawal from the Golan before Syria has stated the concept of peace.

When Syria proposed the formula of full peace in return for full withdrawal and talked about the possibility of ordinary ['adiyah] peace relations in the region, Israel put forth the problem of security arrangements and attahced a number of impossible conditions that touch on Syria's sovereignty and keep the Golan under Israel's direct supervision.

It is quite clear that Israel does not want a just and honorable peace with Syria but, rather, a deal similar to that of Oslo—an agreement that keeps the Golan hostage to occupation in violation of Security Council resolutions and the essence of the American initiative, i.e. land for peace. Israel's rulers believe military threats and saying that peace with Syria could be postponed for many years can undermine Damascus' will and determination to restore all the Golan and southern Lebanon. This is an illusion. Syria will never cede an iota of its land or a single right and will not accept anything short of full and comprehensive withdrawal. It seems that Israel's rulers forget—perhaps deliberately—that peace in the region is impossible without Syria and that the incomplete and lame deals they reached with other sides are threatened by collapse, because these agreements do not make or lead to peace. Rather, they consecrate occupation in other forms.

Syria, inasmuch as it is concerned about real and honorable peace, refuses to be dragged into a partial deal. Israel's rulers will wait for a very long time if they think a policy of blackmail and threats about Israeli elections and the possibility of Likud's return to power will lead Syria to relinquish its land and accept the incomplete settlement they call the regional compromise solution. The Golan has been Syrian land since time immemorial. This fact cannot be changed by Israel's insistence on the policy of annexation and Judaization, or the succession of its governments. This also does not change the fact that there can be no peace in the Middle East without Syria and hence the return of all the Golan to the mother homeland.

Chances of peace are absolutely diminishing, not because of Syria, but due to the prevarication of Israel's rulers and their rejection of compliance with Security Council resolutions and the essence of the American initiative, and their insistence on occupation and expansion. Yitzhaq Rabin won the last elections thanks to his commitment to the realization of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Today, having spent three years in power, it is clear that he is behaving in a confused manner. He has failed to make peace with Syria and Lebanon, or even with the Palestinians, because he has adopted a policy of circumlocution, procrastination, and blackmail and lacks the moral courage to engage in a real, permanent, and just peace and adhere to the requirements of this peace, including full withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands and acknowledgment of Palestinian rights, foremost of which is the right of self-determination.

Peace in the Middle East cannot be established through maneuvers and the policy of deception but rather through submission to facts and events, foremost of which is Security Council resolutions that prohibit the occupation of the lands of others or changing their features or building settlements therein.

Paper Warns Against 'Dangers' of Israeli 'Illusions'

JN2201083095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0553 GMT 22 Jan 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a comment, AL-THAWRAH says Israel ignores the facts of history and geography, trying to circumvent the facts of the conflict and the essence of peace, oblivious of the fact that nothing remains unchanged and that Arab weakness, disarray, poor coordination, and disunited stands and vision cannot last.

The paper adds: Israel imagines that the current situation justifies all this arrogance and rejection of the conditions of a just, comprehensive peace. Therefore, it is trying to perpetuate the state of imbalance through unequal, partial deals to tame the region on the basis of the Israeli peace which achieves Israel's interests without giving the Arabs their territory and rights.

The paper warns against the dangers of the Israeli illusions which undermine chances to achieve a just, comprehensive peace, adding that those illusions place the region on a collision course and open the way for fresh wars with unpredictable regional and international effects and consequences.

In view of those dangers, the paper urges the cosponsors of the peace process to shoulder their responsibility toward implementing their obligations toward the establishment of a just, comprehensive peace in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Afghanistan

Religious Students Reportedly Control Ghazni

LD1901142095 Tehran IRNA in English 1339 GMT 19 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Jan. 19, IRNA—Afghan religious students, generally known as talibaan, have taken control of [Afghanistan's] southern province of Ghazni, newspapers reported here Thursday [19 January]. The report could not be confirmed independently.

Governor of Ghazni Qara Baba who is associated with Jam'iyat-e Eslami led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani handed over his province to talibaan who already have four other provinces under their command following a fierce fighting with forces of anti-Rabbani alliance led by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar.

The news reports said fighter planes of Rabbani government bombed rival positions in Ghazni, 200 km southwest of Afghan capital.

Hekmatyar led alliance known as Supreme Coordination Council of Afghanistan, claimed that its forces had forced government forces to retreat and had made advances.

There are unconfirmed reports that fighting has been going on between talibaan and Council forces for the control of Ghazni.

The whereabouts of Qari Baba who surrendered his province to talibaan fearing success of Council forces, is not known.

Golboddin's Forces Kill 22 People

LD2001164895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Golboddin's militia once again fired rockets on the crowded places and residential houses.

The military correspondent of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reported that the militiamen started firing rockets on crowded areas of the city and residential houses yesterday evening which continued last night.

As a result of the impact of one of these rockets on Shahrara's cross-road, at least 18 innocent citizens of Kabul were killed and a number were injured.

Among the rockets fired by the Golboddin's militia, one rocket landed on a residential house, killing four members of a family and destroying their house. The military correspondent of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY added: The firing of rockets by the Golboddin's militia is resumed at a time when the people of Kabul were building their hope for the positive results of efforts by the United Nations' peace delegation. The people were expecting that these efforts produce positive results as soon as possible and ends the fighting. The last night's rocket attacks turned the people's hope for peace and permanent cease-fire by Golboddin, to a disappointment.

Two Truckloads of Weapons for Opposition Seized

LD2101165095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Two trucks carrying various weapons and ammunition belonging to Hekmatyar's party were seized in Wozi area of Zadran District.

According to BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reports, a large quantity of various weapons and ammunition loaded on two trucks, which had been sent from abroad and were destined for Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia in Logar Province, were recently seized in Woza area of Zadran District by the personnel of Gardez 12 Division. The weapons and ammunition were then sent to the headquarters of 12 Division.

In addition to the seizure of these two trucks, the perpetrators were also arrested, and the case is under serious investigation.

Hekmatyar Forces Block All Roads Leading to Kabul

LD2301105595 Tehran IRNA in English 1011 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Jan. 23, IRNA—The forces opposing President Borhanoddin Rabbani have again blocked all the roads leading to Kabul to weaken the forces loyal to the government.

A spokesman for Islamic party led by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, told IRNA Monday [23 January] that his party has set up the blockade against Kabul in the wake of reports that Rabbani and his military commandor Ahmed Shah Masud were bracing for another round of war and their forces have attacked the Hezb's positions in the outskirts of Kabul during the past few days.

Since the lapse of week-long ceasefire on January 19, the two sides had launched [words indistinct] attacks on each other's positions.

The spokesman said government planes bombed Hezb positions in Chara Siyab area in the vicinity of Kabul on Saturday last. He said Hezb forces bombed Rabbani's troops in Ghazni Province.

The source further added that the attacks by government troops vindicated that Rabbani was not ready to quit power and wanted to delay the transfer of power through such "violations".

Rabbani's extended term of office ran out on December 28. However, all efforts particularly those of U.N. special mission on Afghanistan led by Mehmud Mestiri have so far, have not been successful to broker peace in war ravaged country.

Mestiri has been meeting with different Afghan leaders since late last month in a bid to broker some formula for peaceful transfer of power from Rabbani.

Hekmatyar Issues Statement on Rabbani

LD2301105795 Tehran IRNA in English 0911 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 23, IRNA—Leader of Islamic Party of Afghanistan Golboddin Hekmatyar says continuation of current crisis in the country is due to President Rabbani's insistance on remaining in power. The Islamic Party bureau in Tehran in a statement Sunday [22 January] quoted Hekmatyar as saying that Rabbani's representatives in order to remain in power would put forward new proposals in final stages of peace talks.

The statement also quoted Hekmatyar as urging all groups to take part in the peace talks. Hekmatyar holds the idea that neither leaders nor active members of the parties should hold any role in Afghanistan's future interim government.

Hekmatyar, stressing that the interim government should be formed for a period of six months, outlined the objectives of the future government as unarming the groups, forming law enforcement forces and providing preliminaries for holding elections. Hekmatyar asked Rabbani to step down for an interim government.

Bangladesh

Strike Called During Foreign Investment Meeting

BK2201093495 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has regretted the hartal [strike] call by a section of opposition parties at a time when Bangladesh is holding an international investment conference in the capital [beginning 23 January]. She was addressing the new cadres of the party who joined BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] last night. Highlighting the significance of the Euromoney Conference, Begum Zia said foreign investors will participate in the conference which will brighten the prospects of foreign investment in Bangladesh. Referring to the hartal call by [?a section of] the opposition in the days of the seventh SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit and the visit of a high-powered Japanese business delegation, the prime minister said they always (?called) for hartal on such occasions of national importance.

Former member of the National Board of Revenue and [words indistinct] Shah Mohammad Abu Hussain with [as heard] about 300 people of different strata of Mehendiganj and (Borisu) joined the BNP in presence of Prime Minister and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia in Dhaka last night. Speaking on the occasion, the BNP chairperson stressed the need for enhancing the efficiency of the party leadership along with promoting the popularity of the party. [passage omitted]

India

Arrested 'Hardcore' Militant Reveals Task

BK2101090895 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The arrested hardcore Punjab militant, Devinderpaul Singh, alias Deepak, has revealed to police that his task was to visit European countries to mobilize young expatriates to carry out terrorist activities in India. The Delhi police commissioner, Mr. Nikhel Kumar, told newsmen today that during preliminary interrogation Deepak said he had been in contact with militant coordinators operating from the United States, Britain, and other countries.

The militant, responsible for a series of heinous crimes and bomb attacks, was arrested at the Indira Gandhi International Airport [in New Delhi] last morning.

Soldiers Foil Infiltration by Trained Militants

BK2001163695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the army jawans [soldiers] foiled an infiltration bid by Pakistan-trained militants in the Akhnur sector yesterday. A spokesman of the Defense Ministry said the militants, however, escaped back into Pakistan-held territory under the cover of darkness. The intruders left behind some arms and ammunition.

Meanwhile, the arrested hard-core Punjabi militant, Devinder Pal Singh alias Deepak, has revealed to the police that his task was to visit European countries to mobilize youth expatriates to carry out terrorist activities in India.

Bhatia: Cooperation With Russia 'Back on Track'

BK2201092595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, says India's defense cooperation with Russia is firmly back on track. Addressing a seminar on Indo-Soviet relations in New Delhi today, he said the period of uncertainty is over. Mr. Bhatia said there is a manifest political will on the part of both the countries to strengthen the time-tested friendship. Our effort is on to insulate the Indo-Russian ties from the exigencies of political and economic process. Mr. Bhatia said that the repayment of 3,000 crore rupees annually to Russia over the next decade will provide a still suitable platform for further growth in the bilateral economic cooperation. He said that the target of doubling the trade turnover this year is likely to be achieved as compared to 1991.

Article Examines Security Interests

BK2301104295 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 23 Jan 95 p 13

[Article by M. Rasgotra: "India's Vital Interests"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The end of the cold war, the information revolution of the last decade and the continuing globalisation of business and economy are changing drastically as never before the global security environment. Technology, trade and telecommunications are bringing people closer together across the globe. National borders are impenetrable barriers no more. Institutions, policies and practices, outlooks and attitudes of nations are becoming more alike. Today, economic considerations weigh far more in the foreign and security policies of nations than they did a decade ago.

Uncertainties, unrest and conflict exist for sure, but hopes for co-operation and peace are strong. Circumstances were never more favourable for enhancing security through the fostering of a sense of human community.

The principal reason for this is that new threats of global magnitude have arisen to menace human civilisation which can be countered effectively only through collective international action. Environmental degradation, the North-South inequalities, inter-related problems of population, poverty and health, complex issues arising out of 'globalisation' and the overarching threat of weapons of mass destruction call for integrated and sustained worldwide action. No single nation has the human and material resources to address them meaningfully. Nations have but one choice: to set aside their traditional quarrels and cooperate for survival and progress.

Potential

For reasons of the size of their land-mass and population, their economic potential and political resilience, their strategic locations and military strength, their human and material resources and their past and present roles as civilisational centres, the USA, the European Union and Russia, ASEAN, China, India, Iran and Japan, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa; Argentina, Brazil and Mexico are bound to play a critical role in putting together the new framework for cooperation in these global issues.

America's unipolar moment passed long ago. We live in a truly multicentric world in which nations, big and small, need one another's cooperation and help. India has a significant role in such a world. Regardless of whether or not a permanent seat on the UN Security Council is given to her, India will count increasingly among half-a-dozen ranking nations of the world. Militarily India is more secure today than at any time since independence.

Distinct shift

There is a distinct shift in global strategic perceptions from the Euro-Atlantic region to the Asia-Pacific region. For Europe, after centuries of turbulence and conflict, has finally found its equilibrium and is largely at peace. With her Western region gaining economic primacy and with her acquisition of territories in the Pacific, the USA is now as much an Asian as a Western power. Her security and commercial interests are focusing sharply on the Asia-Pacific region. Because of the inevitable commercial rivalry and politico-strategic interaction among the world's four leading powers—China, Japan, Russia and the USA—this region will be the centre of world attention in much of the 21st century. It may also experience some turbulence in the next decade or two.

India, important part of Asia though she be, is on the margins of this region; and there is no real attraction for us to get involved in APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation]. On the other hand, we need to strengthen economic, political and security links with neighbouring ASEAN. Member countries of ASEAN sit astride the eastern approaches to the Indian Ocean, so vital to India's future security. They have a stake in peace and tranquility in the Indian Ocean. The need for modernisation and expansion of the Indian Navy and maximum maritime interaction with these countries cannot be over-emphasised.

Disintegration of the USSR and the present disarray of Russia notwithstanding, India's strategic manoeuvrability has considerably improved vis-a-vis her two principal neighbours—China and Pakistan. Washington's strategic alliance with Beijing ended with the demise of the USSR. The continuing improvement in Sino-Indian relations, India's improved military preparedness and nuclear capability, and China's preoccupation with her domestic situation and her economic renewal, rule out armed conflict between the two countries in the foreseeable future.

As for Pakistan, the end of the cold war and Russia's retreat from Afghanistan and Central Asia has diminished her strategic relevance. America will not give up Pakistan, but she will not at the same time allow her relations with India to be constrained by the latter's antipathy. These will be shaped increasingly by the growing attraction of the Indian market and the two countries' shared commitment to democratic values. China's ardour for Pakistan too will decline as Sino-Indian relations gain strength.

Pakistan's terrorist mischief in Punjab has been defeated and a similar challenge in Kashmir has now been largely contained. Her sponsorship of terrorist violence in neighbouring countries financed by narcotics trade is bound to boomerang. At her worst, Pakistan can only be a nuisance; she is not a military threat to India in any real sense any more.

Investment

The recent opening up of the Indian market to foreign investment and competition has greatly strengthened India's security environment and diversified her military and political options. With or without SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation], India is the world's second largest market, of more vibrant potential in some respects than China. It has brought her into partnership with powerful countries like Japan, Germany, Britain and France.

Russia remains an important partner for India in diverse fields of cooperation because of a large measure of complementarities in the economic interests and strategic and political perceptions of Moscow and New Delhi. Our relationship with Russia has survived that country's recent trials and will gain in strength again as its economy recovers and its new democratic policy becomes stable.

US interest

Perhaps the most vital element in India's new security environment is America's interest in military cooperation with India. It has been triggered largely by the opening of the Indian market to foreign investment and competition America's vital oil and other interests as well as her presence in the Gulf region and in the Indian Ocean are a fact of life. [sentence as published] So also is India's commanding position in the Indian Ocean. The two countries' common stake in stability and peace in the Indian Ocean region should urge closer economic, political and security cooperation between them. The agreement signed here during Defence Secretary Perry's visit merely accords recognition to a welcome turn in the global security environment. There should be no hesitation on the Indian side to deepen this cooperation without in any way yielding to unwarranted American pressures in regard to nuclear questions or other vital questions of India's military security.

America's current apathy toward Iran—the Gulf region's central power—should not be allowed to come in the way of a closer relationship between New Delhi and Tehran. For Iran provides us a vital link with the Central Asian Republics where India's cultural and economic interests are very substantial indeed. No picture of Indian Ocean's security would be truly complete without Iran figuring in it. In such ways as are open to it, Indian diplomacy should help to pave the way for Iran's return to the mainstream of international life and to remove the prevailing misunderstandings and hostility between Washington and Tehran.

*Court Revokes Ban on Jamaat-e-Islami Hind

95AS0172A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE in English 8 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Dec. 7 (PTI [Press Trust of India])—The Supreme Court on Wednesday [7 December] lifted the ban on Jamaat-e-Islami Hind imposed in the wake of demolition of Babri mosque, by quashing an order of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Tribunal which had confirmed the ban.

A three-judge Bench, by a unanimous judgment, quashed the one-man tribunal's verdict of April 11, 1994 and held that there was neither sufficient ground for banning the Jamaat, nor did the tribunal objectively determine the facts leading to the ban under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The Union government had outlawed Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and four other organisations—Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Bajrang Dal and Islamic Sevak Sangh—by two separate notifications issued on December 10, 1992, four days after the disputed Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri mosque structure was demolished at Ayodhya.

The Bench, comprising Mr Justice J. S. Verma, Mr Justice S. P. Bharucha and Mr Justice K. S. Paripoornan, in their 38-page judgment, allowed the Jamaat's appeal against the tribunal's order, but dismissed a writ petition of the Jamaat challenging the constitutionality of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The court, however, ruled that since its conclusions were based upon the material placed before the tribunal, they shall not be taken to debar action against the Jamaat hereafter if the necessary material is available.

The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind was banned for allegedly disclaiming and questioning sovereignty and territorial integrity of India on the basis of two speeches delivered by its Amir (president), Maulana Sirajul Hasan, and Naib Amir (vice-president), Mr Abdul Aziz.

While Maulana Hasan declared in a meeting at Delhi on May 27, 1990 that the separation of Kashmir from India was inevitable, Mr Abdul Aziz said on August 1, 1991 at Malerkotla that the government should hold plebiscite on Kashmir.

Though the notification was brought into effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette, this action was struck down by the apex court on March 18, 1994 and the notification became effective from the date of confirmation by the tribunal.

The tribunal was headed by Mr Justice B. M. Lal, a sitting judge of the Allahabad High Court.

Reacting to the Supreme Court judgment, the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind said the verdict has strengthened people's confidence in the supremacy of the rule of law.

In a statement, Maulana Hasan said the apex court's decision would prevent "arbitrary" actions by the government against any organisation engaged in philanthropic work.

The Maulana said it has vindicated the Jamaat's stand that it was banned in the aftermath of demolition of the disputed structure at Ayodhya to "balance" the ban imposed on three Hindu organisations.

*Advisory Committee Established in Kashmir

95AS0166A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 5 Dec 94 p 13

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Press Trust of India, Jammu, December 4—The Jammu and Kashmir government has set up a provincial advisory committee of politicians and prominent citizens to advise the government on matters relating to law and order situation, with special emphasis on combating militancy in the Jammu region.

The committee, having 32 members from various political parties and social organisations, is headed by divisional commissioner Jammu, B. R. Kundal, according to an official spokesman.

The committee has some official members including inspector general of police, Jammu division, A. K. Suri, IG of traffic and civil defence S. S. Ali and deputy commissioner, Jammu, Khurshid Ahmed Ganai.

Similar, advisory groups were already functioning at village, panchayat, block and district levels, he said, adding the government is also contemplating to have such advisory groups of different political leaders at the state level.

Reports from New Delhi said, in bold initiative, Kashmiri migrants who had to flee Kashmir in the face of attacks and threats from Pakistani trained militants have invited Muslims from the Valley for a "meaningful dialogue" to remove mutual fissures and mistrust.

Taking the initiative on behalf of their community, eminent Kashmiri pandit freedom fighters, retired top bureaucrats and intellectuals have issued an appeal inviting their Muslim brethren for a "meaningful dialogue aimed at resolving all issues which keep us apart."

Most of the signatories are former top state officials with a creditable record of service to the people, underwent jail imprisonments in quit Kashmir movement and were in the vanguard of movement to take up arms against Pakistani tribal raiders in 1947-48.

The leaders in an appeal to Muslims said the senseless campaign of violence, terror had brought about traumatic changes in the life of ordinary Kashmiris be they Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs or Buddhists making them victims of perverse culture of bigotry and the gun.

Meanwhile, 11 militants, two of them foreign mercenaries, were among 15 people killed while security forces nabbed 12 ultras in Jammu and Kashmir since yesterday evening.

Militants looted a village, set afire a school and made an abortive bid to blow up a security picket, an official spokesman said.

Four militants were killed in an encounter with army at Narkote in frontier district of Kupwara.

Two foreign mercenaries were killed in an encounter with security forces during search operations at Dharsu-Gali in Doda district of Jammu region.

*Paper Interviews Former Space Chairman Rao

95AS0167A Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 5 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by Ravi R. Prasad: "Spy Case Will Not Affect Space Plans: U.R. Rao"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bangalore, Dec. 4—Even as the investigating agencies are continuing to pick up Indian Space Research Organization [ISRO] officials for interrogation, the top space scientists claim that the espionage case may not affect the country's ambitious space programme.

"The space programme will not suffer any damage. It has been built up very well in the last 20 years," Professor U. R. Rao, former chairman, ISRO, told THE STATESMAN.

Refusing to comment on the espionage scandal, he said the country's space programme is on a sound footing and such upsets will not have an impact on it. "The technology growth is so tremendous in ISRO that these things will not damage the programme," he added.

Asked about the involvement of any middleman in the negotiations with the Glaskosmos, the Russian company, for the cryogenic technology, Professor Rao said no such agent or middleman was involved. The ISRO was in direct touch with the Russian company.

While Professor Rao was not prepared to comment on the scandal that has rocked the premier space organization and shocked the entire country, his successor and the present Chairman of ISRO, Dr K. Kasturiranagan, was not available for his remarks.

However, in a morale booster sent yesterday to all the scientists Mr Kasturirangan [as published] has said that the unfortunate development has "deeply hurt" everyone in the organization. "Your chairman is with you in preserving the basic culture of the ISRO and getting on with our task with the same dedication. You will agree with me that we have no time to lose," the letter stated.

The letter has done little to strengthen the sagging confidence of the scientists as many of their colleagues are suspected of being involved in the espionage. The investigating agencies probing the espionage case picked up some more ISRO officials for interrogation here a couple of days ago. Many more officials of ISRO as well as the HAL [Hindustan Aeronautics, Limited] have been placed under surveillance, sources said.

A team of investigating officials is keeping a watch on HAL officials as some parts of the cryogenic engine are being developed at the Aerospace division of this public sector giant. The Liquid Propulsion Systems centre (LPSC), Thiruvananathapuram, had deputed some of its officials to the Aerospace Division of HAL.

The espionage case has exposed the shortcomings of the security of these sensitive organizations. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), the organization responsible for the security at all the centres of the ISRO, seems to have failed miserably.

The CISF, set up in 1970, after sabotage at the HEC [expansion not given] Ranchi by some foreign agents in 1964 is responsible for providing physical, personnel and document security to the centre. But the event at LPSC clearly indicates that the force has failed to provide anything beyond physical security.

The periodic surveillance of those personnel involved in sensitive and secret assignments was not carried out. The documents being taken out from the centre by such senior officials as Nambi Narayanan and Sashikumar were not checked by the CISF personnel.

According to sources, the CISF should conduct periodic surveillance of all the personnel and check all the documents being taken out from the premises by any staff member. Had this been done, the espionage would never have taken place, it is claimed.

Sources in the ISRO suspected that the Deputy Director of LPSC, Nambi Narayanan, might have passed on the working designs of the crucial cryogenic stage of the Geostationary Satellite Launch Vehicle, to Mariam Rasheeda, the Maldivian agent.

*Papers Detail Space Agency Spy Case

Pakistani Scientist's Role

95AS0178A Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 6 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 5—The CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] team investigating the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] espionage case began its work today amid allegations that a Pakistani scientist had recently visited the town to personally take delivery of confidential information. In an attempt to stem a scandal that could seriously affect morale, the ISRO chairman, Mr Kasturirangan, has set up camp here.

Sources in Kerala Police said that the Pakistani scientist, who had reportedly come via the Maldives on a fake passport, easily managed to buy the information at a fixed price. His schedule had reportedly been worked out by the Inter-Services Intelligence.

Details provided by sources in Kerala Police give the impression that most ISRO scientists were easy bait for espionage agents dealing in information relating to missile technology. It appears that Pakistani Intelligence agents could easily access information using fake passports, with Indian scientists as willing accomplices.

The sources said that information required would be requested in advance and, in certain cases, suggested by the ISRO agents. This process, they said, was similar to that in any trading office. Once the information available was accepted, the price was fixed and information subsequently handed over to an identified agent.

Some sources said that the scientists implicated in espionage even used their official position to have material referred to them from other space centres according to the demands of the buyers of the information.

This state of affairs had its fallout in the loss of trust in India by other countries. The French Government reportedly refused to exchange information with ISRO because it had suspected that the details supplied would not be treated in confidence. Similarly, the Russians were reluctant to transfer cryogenic technology to India.

The scandal has made the Indian space programme look as though it is being handled by unethical scientists susceptible to market pressures.

Effect on Cryogenic Project

95AS0178B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 6 Dec 94 p 6

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bangalore, Dec. 5—In spite of claims by top space scientists that space programmes will not be affected by the espionage case at the Indian Space Research Organization [ISRO] that has rocked the country, the indications are that the development of the cryogenic engine will suffer a setback.

In addition to the sagging morale of the ISRO scientists, the arrest of the Deputy Director of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre, Mr Nambi Narayanan, and the Project Manager (fabrication), Mr D. Sasikumar, will have an adverse impact on the whole project.

According to well placed sources in ISRO, Mr Narayanan was instrumental in the launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle [PSLV] as he had perfected the technology and had been given the responsibility of developing the cryogenic engine—the third stage of the Geostationary Satellite Launch Vehicle [GSLV].

Similarly, Mr D. Sasikumar was in charge of fabricating the engine of the cryogenic stage. He had also played a crucial role in developing the PSLV along with Mr Narayanan.

The arrest of these two scientists for their alleged involvement in the espionage scandal has created a vacuum at the supervisory level of the cryogenic engine project.

According to the schedule drawn up by the ISRO for the GSLV, the first experimental launch is scheduled for 1997-98 using Russian cryogenic engines for the third stage.

The first indigenous cryogenic engine was expected to be ready by the turn of the century.

With this scandal coming to light and the arrest of the officials concerned, the indigenous engine is likely to get delayed by a year or even more as the vacuum at the LPSC [Liquid Propulsion Systems Center] has to be filled up following which the project has to be reviewed to assess the damage done by the accused.

The arrested officials, during interrogation, have reportedly revealed their involvement in espionage for the last six years.

This indicates that all the research and development work done by the team of scientists at LPSC on the cryogenic engine during the said period has found its way to the foreign countries interested in getting the know-how.

The sources said that besides reviewing the cryogenic project the Centre, along with the ISRO authorities, will have to take some measures to strengthen security at the space centres as the existing system had failed miserably.

Submarine Technology Leaked

95AS0178C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 6 Dec 94 p 15

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Press Trust of India, Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 5—Very low frequency (VLF) technology for submarine communication, one of the greatest spin-offs of the Indian space programme till date, is understood to have been leaked by the espionage racket being cracked by the investigating agencies.

VLF is a powerful communication tool for submarines developed by the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC).

LPSC, which accidentally caught of the idea of using very low frequency of sound for communication in water, later designed it as a fool-proof submarine communication technology for use by frigates without the need for vessels appearing on the water surface or even projecting their antennae upwards, ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] sources said.

India is among the five countries in the world to possess the sophisticated technology which ensures complete safety of underwater communication.

After the successful preliminary trials LPSC had handed over the technology to the Naval Physical and Oceanographical Laboratory (NPOL) in Kochi which is the major supporting defence outfit of the Indian navy. On ensuring it a fool-proof technology, NPOL had handed over the VLF equipment to the Indian navy for commissioning, sources said.

VLF technology, just the reverse of the very high frequency (VHF) technology used in two-way radios, works on the theory that very low frequency of sound could travel in water effectively without any loss of quality even in high turbulence.

Mr A. S. Ramamurthy, director of NPOL, said in Kochi that his organisation was not involved in the espionage at all. "The VLF technology was designed and developed by another organisation, which also designed the equipment," he said, without directly referring to the LPSC.

Mr Ramamurthy said director general of the Defence Research and Development Organisations (DRDO) A. P. J. Abdul Kalam had sought a report from NPOL last week on the VLF, which was duly furnished by him.

NPOL being a defence outfit has left no chance of being infiltrated into by any vested interests, NPOL sources said. Confirmation of reports that VLF was leaked from LPSC, not from NPOL could pose many a threat as the countries who received the technology could easily develop the VLF communication equipment, apart from being able to intercept the country's communication signals.

It would also be tantamount to loss of several years of effort put in to develop the technology and the country would be at pains till another sophisticated technology, at least one step ahead of the VLF, was developed, defence experts feel.

Meanwhile Kerala chief minister K. Karunakaran today said the government would not spare any effort to bring the guilty to book in the espionage case involving ISRO scientists, among others.

Referring to the alleged involvement of an inspector general of police in the case, Mr Karunakaran told newsmen that the state government would extend all possible help to the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] team, which is being entrusted to enquire into the scandal.

The case was very serious and cuts at the very roots of India's development, he said adding the government was determined to apprehend the culprits however highly placed he may be.

*Center Reportedly Profits From Bhopal Payments

95AS0165A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 5 Dec 94 pp 1, 13

[Article by Rakesh Bhatnagar: "Bhopal Gas Victims Fill Central Govt. Coffers"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Times of India News Service, New Delhi, December 4—The Central government may end up richer when all the claimants receive their meagre compensation amount in future. Bizarre as it may sound, the government is making a fortune out of the tragedy.

Of the 16,177 death and 4.27 lakh injury cases, the government's share is Rs 7,200 per claim. Assuming that all these claims are settled, the government would collect a mind boggling Rs 319 crores. This amount is about 45 per cent of Rs 715 crores that the Union Carbide Corporation (UCC) would have paid to the government over five years for providing monetary relief to the gas victims.

Meanwhile, the government has "recovered" about Rs 100 crores out of the Rs 205.10 crores paid to over 1.16 lakh claimants. Even though the claims commissioner had over Rs 1,245 for the victims, a woefully inadequate compensation amount has been fixed for these victims of neglect by the multinational corporation and the state government.

For instance, the claims commissioner appears to feel satisfied in "awarding" an average Rs 91,081 for every person who died in the tragedy. The average compensation for an injured including the permanently disabled is Rs 26,470. There were as many as 16,177 death claims filed for compensation but only 12,423 have been "disposed off" and Rs 61.74 crores granted towards the full and final settlement. But, even this amount continues to elude them as only Rs 48.75 crores have so far been disbursed.

Of the 4.27 lakh injured demanding for a just settlement, only 1.04 lakh claims are reported to have been settled over the years. Of the Rs 277 crores award fixed by the commissioner, only Rs 156.35 crores has been disbursed till date.

It was at the instance of the supreme court in 1991 that the centre became the guardian of the victims through a legislation for the protection of the victims' interests, and had started paying a meagre Rs 200 per month as interim relief to the victims.

Despite the fact that the principal settlement amount of Rs 715 crores has now become Rs 1245.92 crores and after accumulating Rs 530.92 crores interest on it in the past five years, the claims commissioner does not appear to be taking into account the increasing high cost of living.

Given this scenario, an adequate compensation amount is a far cry. In addition, there are serious allegations of a corrupt nexus between the various organised professionals who have fixed a price tag for an early, if not timely, disbursement of money among the undernourished and medically neglected victims who are the incapacitated men, women and children.

A large number of children born in the worst affected residential wards near the UCC's pesticide plant during the past 10 years will have to "live" with the life-long agony. However, no provision has been made for providing succour to the post-tragedy generation. Similarly, those who have started developing complications at a later stage are not being given adequate care.

Even the 500-bed hospital which the UCC's one-man trust had undertaken to build on a cost free land in Bhopal has not yet taken off. The state government has not been able to even notify the acquisition of land for the project in which the trust has to pool in Rs 60 crores. The UCC's trust has raised the requisite amount by selling its equity on the orders of the apex court.

Sir Ivan Percival, who was appointed the sole trustee after the Bhopal court attached the UCC's properties as its officials including former chairman Anderson was declared "absconder", says that it was a voluntary offer made by the UCC to construct the hospital. He denies that the supreme court had directed it to construct the hospital. He also says the UCC had never intended to "escape with any cash" which had been frozen by the trial court.

Following the expiry of the first decade of the horrendous industrial disaster, the government must give a serious thought to the victims' plight. Under the 1985 legislation, the government is constitutionally bound to first come to the rescue of the victims rather than feel pleased in recovering the interim relief amount which the "welfare state" had paid by providing one meal a day for the victims.

Iran

Navy, Air Force Begin 'Grand' Maneuvers in Gulf

LD2201164095 Tehran IRNA in English 1603 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr (Hormozgan Prov.), Jan. 22, IRNA—A grand maneuver codenamed T.M. 73-2 started at the Second Navy Zone of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the northern waters of the Persian Gulf on Sunday [22 January].

The maneuver is held in two stages for five days with participation of the airborne units of the Air Force.

Head of the tactical headquarters of the military exercise, Captain Gholam Reza Ma'sumi said the maneuver will include tactical tele-communications operations, movement of vessels, electronic war, air defence from the sea, and surface to air and air to surface spotting.

He said that promotion of the combat readiness of the Navy and airborne units were the objective of the maneuver.

The T.M. 73-1 military exercise of the Second Navy Zone was held in the Persian Gulf in June.

Over 1,500 Arrested in Anti-Narcotics Exercise

LD2201143595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1230 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] More than 600 kilograms of various kinds of narcotic substances were seized by the end of the Fath [conquest] exercises in Tehran.

The Fath-1 nationwide anti-narcotic exercises were conducted throughout last week.

The commander of the Greater Tehran security zone spoke to reporters today describing the aims of the exercises in the Greater Tehran security zone as: the clearing of infected urban areas, destroying networks involved in the distribution of narcotics, arresting narcotic-smugglers, and investigating reports received by the people.

He added: During the exercise, 90 units of security officers from the Greater Tehran security zone searched over 400 suspicious places. He said: during the implementation of the Fath-1 exercises 976 addicts and 530 narcotic-smugglers were arrested. He asked the people to report any suspicious case by calling the telephone number: 128.

Commentary Justifies Islamic Jihad Attack in Israel

LD2301095495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Martyrdom operations by a combatant from Palestine's Islamic Jihad movement shook the city of Tel Aviv yesterday, killed 18 soldiers, and injured dozens of other Israelis.

Following this operation, which was unprecedented in terms of casualties, the Zionist regime militarily sealed off the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and totally stopped Palestinian traffic from these areas to other parts of the occupied territories.

This decision by the Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister of the Zionist regime, was aimed at preventing similar operations.

Political analysts believe that as long as the Zionist regime suppresses the Muslim people of Palestine and continues to take over territories by building new settlements, even in areas occupied in 1967, and violates all international laws, the Palestinian people should not be expected to keep silence in the face of such great suppression and injustice.

In its suppression of the Palestinian people, the Zionist regime has not even shown mercy to the Palestinian police—whose primary aim is to protect the security of the usurper regime—and recently killed a group of them. In the agreement on the autonomy of Gaza and Jericho, the Zionist regime committed itself to end the construction of settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However despite this, the regime allowed Zionists to begin the construction of settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank a few days ago.

According to the UN resolutions, these areas are occupied territories and according to international law a change in the demography of these areas is forbidden. Contrary to these laws and commitments, the Zionist regime continues its expansionist policies and violates the rights of the Palestinian people.

Under such conditions the people of Palestine have no choice but to fight the enemy and as long as the Zionist regime continues the policy of usurping the rights of the Palestinian people, it is futile to expect security measure to prevent anti-Zionist operations.

Commentary Views 'Obstacles' in ECO Cooperation

NC2101081795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 21 Jan 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The annual foreign ministerial session of the Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO, is to open today in the Turkmen capital, Ashgabat. During this four-day session, in addition to examining the organization's operations last year, next year's programs will also be compiled and approved. The establishment of a development and trade bank, an insurance company, and air and shipping companies will be among the most important topics to be discussed by the ECO foreign ministers. The establishment of such institutions shows that the ECO members are looking for ways that can activate the organization.

Currently, this organization has 10 members with a total population of 300 million. Member countries have rich potential and resources, and their cooperation within the framework of the ECO's regional union can be effective in the better use of these resources.

This is important since the nature of international relations has shifted from military to economic. With the formation of regional unions in the world, singularity in foreign policy cannot meet the interests of nations. The geopolitical status of the ECO members is such that it not only dictates cooperation among them, but can also grant this organization the role of an important bridge between Asia and Europe.

Despite these special characteristics and the existence of potential and actual resources in this region, it seems that the ECO members have not been able to make the best possible use of existing potential. The reason for this is that some ECO members are involved in domestic crises. The Tajikistan crisis, the Azerbaijani-Armenian war, and the Afghan crisis are among the worst.

Moreover, instead of cooperating with the other members to activate the ECO, some member-countries have adopted a policy of competition and the organization has actually become the scene of rivalry among some of its members. Also, instead of granting priority to ECO members when it comes to meeting their needs, some member-countries prefer to meet their needs from other sources. This actually upsets the situation inside then ECO.

More important still is the fact that some countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus still lack the necessary political determination to regulate their relations with the other ECO members. This stems from Russia's policy toward these countries, since Russia continues to consider these areas to be within the sphere of its domination.

It seems that next to its efforts to strengthen the ECO, this organization should also place ways to remove these obstacles on the top of the list of its political priorities. Of course, some of these obstacles will be inevitable in the short run. But some other obstacles, such as the existing crises among some members, can be removed with the active cooperation of the member-countries.

Low-Level Participation Criticized

LD2201140995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1055 GMT 22 Jan 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The fifth ministerial meeting of the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] began its work with a speech by Mr. Velayati, our foreign affairs minister, in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan, yesterday. [passage omitted]

It seems that a number of countries—incited by political pressure of foreign governments, who are afraid of the growing cooperation and friendship among the Muslim member states of the ECO—are refusing to participate actively in the ECO programs. This is so much the case that a number of countries have only sent their first deputy ministers to the Ashgabat session.

Obviously, if the ECO member countries pay further attention to the necessities and benefits of their active participation in regional cooperation and refuse to be incited by foreigners, then the ECO will be able to achieve its honorable goals of independent development and growth for its member countries.

New Rules Set To Facilitate Foreign Investment

LD2101163795 Tehran IRNA in English 1546 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 21, IRNA—Iran's High Council for Foreign Investment would introduce new regulations soon to faciliatate foreign investment in the Tehran Stock Exchange.

Secretary general of the Tehran stock exchange Allahverdi Raja'i said here today that the main problem in this regard was lack of regulations on return of capital and its interests.

Although the law on attraction and backing of foreign investments has envisaged return of capitals and its interests, no mention has been made of foreign investments in the Tehran Stock Exchange, he said.

He said that the draft regulations on foreign investments in the stock exchange have been prepared on the basis of which foreign investors should deposit their money in the accounts of Iranian stock brokers in an Iranian bank in order to buy shares.

In case a foreign investor wants to sell his shares, his broker should sell them and desposit the money including its interests in the bank account of the investor, he said.

Raja'i, saying that few shares of Iranian companies have so far been purchased by a handful of foreign investors through the Tehran Stock Exchange, called on Iranians residing abroad to contribute to their country's economic development by investing in Iranian economic institutes through the stock exchange.

He said some rls. 570 billion worth of shares of Iranian companies were traded at the Tehran Stock Exchange between March and December 1994. This compares to rls. 515 billion worth of deals in the whole year of 1372 (March 1993-March 1994), he added.

The official said that if the supply of shares had been equal to demands, the total amount of deal in the past nine months would have doubled.

Qom Leader Says Country Ready for IAEA Inspections

LD2101102895 Tehran IRNA in English 0853 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Qom, Tehran Prov., Jan. 21, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran through establishment and completion of its atomic power plants is in fact pursuing peaceful purposes, said substitute Friday prayer leader of Qom, Ayatollah Ebrahim Amini.

Referring to allegations made by western media on Iran's military objectives behind completion of Bushehr atomic power plant, Ayatollah Amini said that Iran has repeatedly voiced readiness for the inspection of its installations by experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA].

Elsewhere in his sermons, the substitute Friday prayer termed policies of the Russian Government in Chechnya as "disgraceful" and criticized international communities for remaining silent vis-a-vis massacre of women and children in the republic.

Radio Urges U.S. To Change Policy

LD2301131695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with the WASHINGTON TIMES, American Secretary of State Warren Christopher, severally criticized other countries for helping Iran's atomic energy project and said Iran was a great danger for the security and stability of the Middle East.

Such statements are somewhat repetitive and archaic and everyone knows that the statements come within the general U.S. strategic framework, but it is useful to study why this propaganda and political commotion has been intensified against our country.

Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the U.S. has tried hard to return Iran to the U.S. sphere of political influence and it's domain of economic robbery.

However all its efforts have been defeated against the powerful will of the Muslim and revolutionary people of our country and the leadership of the Islamic Revolution.

Without doubt it can be said that the recent statement of the U.S. secretary of state proves the defeat of the U.S. policy in Iran.

Economic sanctions, propaganda and political commotion, and finally military attacks through regional elements were the tools used by the U.S. against the Islamic Revolution and people of Iran but they have failed to deviate the Muslim people of Iran from their aim of achieving independence and a free life in the light of Islam's liberating teachings.

The people of our country have made sacrifices to save the achievements which they had gained through sacrifice of blood, and which is the greatest revolution in the 20th century.

In the post-war period too the revolutionary people of Iran are determined to rebuild the destruction caused by the hidden U.S. hands and to reform the single commodity economy as well as to continue their proud presence in the international scene.

This undeniable and proud reality has changed the behavior of many countries of the world towards our country.

European countries which followed the U.S. policy of enmity for Iran have now come to the conclusion that the Islamic Revolution is not a temporary political event that might be overthrown or changed through political, economic, and military pressure. They have accepted the reality of the order of the Islamic Republic of Iran and are following new strategies towards expansion of relations with Iran.

Also after 16 years and despite Western-created fear, regional countries have learnt that an Islamic Iran—in the light of Islam's calls for unity—has sincerely tried to bring Islamic countries together and has never had any intention of aggression against another county.

This truth came into light when the direct and indirect role of the West was revealed in all regional tensions, particularly in the imposed [Iran-Iraq] war and the oil war [in Kuwait].

The endurance of the Islamic Revolution and the departure of most countries from U.S. policy vis-a-vis Iran, has left the White House with a dilemma.

It can continue its Zionist and anti-Islamic policies—in which case the region's people will learn even more about the real nature of America.

The continuation of U. S. double standards in opposing Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy while keeping deadly silent over the Zionist regime's use of nuclear energy, will sooner or later aggravate the enmity of the Muslim people in the region against Washington to such an extent that even the regimes dependent on the U.S. will not be able to express their friendship with them.

The other option open to the U.S. is to accept the Islamic Revolution as a fact, as other countries have done, and to respect - without demanding political and economic concessions—the decision of the Iranian people.

Majles Speaker: 'No Negotiations' With U.S.

LD2301094595 Tehran IRNA in English 0722 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Semnan, Jan. 23, IRNA—The Majles speaker, 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, said here in central Iran Sunday [22 January] that there would be no negotiations with America.

Nateq-Nuri, who was answering questions of the university students and teachers, remarked that Iran's stands on the U.S. has been set by the leader of revolution, adding that the officials and the government had been prohibited from negotiating with America.

He said that no foreign power could meddle in Iran's policies and stressed that Iran was following an independent policy at international level. Decisions are made on the basis of interests of the country and world Muslims, he added.

On compromise of some of Arab heads of states with the Zionist regime, he noted that Iran had made it clear to Palestinian armed groups that Iran would never change its stand on the Zionist regime if they ever compromised on Palestine.

Pointing out that Iran had the potential for exports in economic sector especially in agriculture, the speaker said that many of the projects carried on by foreigners in the past, were now implemented by indigenous experts in Iran.

On baseless claims of the U.A.E on Iranian island of Abu Musa, Nateq-Nuri commented that Iran had repeatedly announced that the problem could be settled between the two sides through negotiations without others interfering in it.

Answering a question on the recent plane crash in which a number of Iranian air force top officials lost their lives, he said that the accident was due to the pilot's failure to precisely check the altitude.

Yazdi Sermon Addresses Foreign Issues

LD2001180895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1200 GMT 20 Jan 95

[Second Friday sermon by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judiciary, at Tehran University on 20 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] First of all I would like to offer my congratulations on the auspicious birthday of the Lord of the Era, may God hasten his lofty advent. Fortunately the occasion was marked properly and during celebration days there were speeches by various officials. We all particularly benefited from the speech made by the esteemed leader His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i. I still feel that I should say something more on this occasion.

On the basis of our belief, Shiite thought is granted the outstanding positive point of having a continuous imamate and guardianship of the Muslims' cause for ever until the day of judgement. During his life the noble prophet of Islam transferred his authority to the imams [to succeed him after his death]. Each of the imams performed their duties in accordance with the needs of their era until it was the turn of the 12th imam. His holiness shouldered the burden of this responsibility [while remaining hidden from the public]. For about 69 years his duties were performed by particular vice regents [nuvab]. The vice regents used to meet him and enquire about various issues. They would then pass the messages to the ummah.

After the period of 69 years, it was announced that the imam was going to be hidden for a long time. It was stressed that his advent depends on divine will. When God decides, his holiness will return. He has said no one can contact him directly to be appointed as the vice regent. The ummah, therefore, receives instructions through a vice regent [niyabat] respected by the public. Time is short and I cannot embark on a lengthy discussion. However some have said that it was a will of God that the imam should remain hidden. Whatever the reason, it was a will of God and up to the people to resolve their issues.

There is a view expressed, that can be refuted by the simplest social mentality, that Islam existed for 250 or 260 years, and that it was then abandoned for everyone to do what they like. In other words; this great divine book, with all its subtle details and laws was revealed, and further the prophet of God suffered so much for 25 years to relay the message, but it all came to an end. And now everyone to his own accord? When some realized how baseless and difficult a statement this was, they said: Some things can be taken over and acted on, such as the affairs of minors, the affairs of the absentee, public endowments that need management, and looking after the affairs of the dead or the sick that must be taken to hospital. Things, that in the word of the gentlemen, the Islamic law-maker has no opinion regarding who does them although they must be done. It is not important who does it. These things must be carried out. It would be better if a cleric did them, if not a religious follower would do it, and if not a corrupt person could do it. Even further, an unjust man could even do it, it would not matter. It is not a question of who but what must be done.

But some have said that this statement is obviously wrong and the definite religious decrees of the Holy Koran, which make up a main part of the Lord's book and which according to our traditions and books collected in the first 200 years [of Islamic history]—or according to the imam [Khomeyni]—may he be admitted to God's paradise—make up two thirds of our theology—they are all social and political decrees. Can they be all abandoned or left to be controlled by anyone? And would everything end when some one came to power through coercion? This is altogether unacceptable and this cannot be so. The matter has been determined by Koranic verses and traditional teachings. And the debate on guardianship, the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult, during the period of the absence [of the 12th imam] has been discussed from the very early days: stating that the existing jurisconsults, whose signs have been stated, are in charge. They are the guardians of the cause, and they must take control and act. [passage omitted]

The holy month of Ramadan is approaching. This is the month of God and the Koran. We are all God's guests [in this month] and should highly appreciate this opportunity to say prayers for Islam and the Muslims. [passage omitted]

What is happening in Chechnya is truly very deplorable. I think the Russian government has made a very grave blunder. The repercussions of this blunder are not going to disappear so soon either. The world of Islam is concerned about the ongoing clashes. We are surprised.

One cannot expect the U.S. Government to do anything else. The U.S. secretary of state says: The Chechnya issue is only a small matter in the ties between America and Russia and it is nothing much.

Of course, since the victims are the Muslims, and the fact that a number of Muslims are killed in this manner daily, are made homeless and their rights are violated, it is not important at all. On the other hand, as I have mentioned before, when the Islamic Republic of Iran signs an agreement with the same Russian Government [to complete the Bushehr nuclear power station], the gentlemen raise their hue and cry, saying: Oh this has happened and that has happened!

Are we still expected to look at America with admiring eyes? In a short space of time, on two different issues, you [the U.S. Government] reacted against the Islamic Republic in two different manners. Your approach to each of these two issues was so clearly biased that even a child could understand. What was the time gap between these two approaches? In both cases the Russian Government was involved. When the Islamic Republic signs an agreement with Russia, you adopt a certain approach. On the other hand, you adopt a different approach when the Russian Government behaves in this way in Chechnya. Anyone comparing these two approaches can easily understand what sort of people you are. Frankly it must be said that the U.S. politicians are directly involved in the crimes committed in the world, anywhere in the world. [Audience shouts "Death to America, Death to Israel"]

It is hoped that the Russian Government will make up for its blunder as soon as possible, by resolving the problem through talks. Continuation of this situation is not acceptable at all and will create more problems for them.

As we all hear and see, the usurper Zionist regime, with utmost impudence and shamelessness, is continuing to build Jewish settlements even in the territories which they themselves agreed in their recent accords to hand over to the [Palestinian] self-rule authority. They continue with the building of the settlements and accept no agreements or signed documents. That is a government that does not accept any international, domestic, or humanitarian rules and regulations. They do not even accept the documents which they themselves have signed. In such conditions, one does not know how, after his meek surrender, Mr. 'Arafat can now justify what he sees from them? What justification remains for dear Palestinians? Whom can they trust? Which agreement or remark can they trust? That is the usurper regime's practice which as we see accepts nothing. And naturally that is why dear Palestinians have reached this definite conclusion that they should restore their own rights; and sooner or later they will restore their rights.

I am running out of time. But, I want to say one thing: I want, on my part, to express thanks to and praise the Islamic Majles for its very precise and careful decision. It manifests the awareness, familiarity, and full control of the esteemed deputies of the Majles. While paying attention to the need for the development of public opinion and familiarity of the general public with the world and new technology, they were fully aware of the need for a healthy mind and to campaign against cultural onslaught. To be honest, one must praise the decision that was taken by the Majles regarding the use of satellite dishes or the use of statellite programs, especially if you listened to the debate [in the Majles]—and I managed to listen to a part of it. The Majles is aware and has taken this decision after considering all the various aspects. I must express thanks and praise for their very good and proper decision similar to their other decisions.

They are naturally involved in the debate on an important and new issue, that is the 1374 [beginning 21 March 95] budget. In fact the adjustment of the 1374 budget in accordance with the Second Development Plan is a very heavy and difficult task. I am very pleased that the situation is such that the Majles, the government, and the country's officials, carry out the tasks with coordination and understanding. God willing, the 1374 budget, in the view of the Second Five-Year Plan, will be organized in such a way as to protect the country's high interests. [passage omitted]

Justice Minister Leaves for Visit to China

LD2201215895 Tehran IRNA in English 2036 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 22, IRNA—Minister of Justice Esma'il Shushtari leading a high-ranking Iranian delegation left here today for a 5-day official visit to China.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Shushtari is visiting China on an invitation by his Chinese counterpart.

During their meetings the Iranian and Chinese judicial authorities are to confer on different areas of legal and judicial bilateral cooperation as well as to get acquainted with each other's judicial systems.

Chinese Official Meets With Deputy Foreign Minister

LD2201203995 Tehran IRNA in English 1949 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 22, IRNA—Iranian deputy foreign minister for Asia and the Pacific, Ala'eddin Borujerdi and head of Chinese Institute for International Studies, Yang Chengxu, here on Sunday [22 January] held talks on Tehran-Beijing relations.

The two officials exchanged views on issues of mutual interest including human rights, political pressures of the U.S. on Iran and China and the future of Hong Kong.

Bourujerdi said that Iran believes in peace and security in Asia and had made every effort to resolve the problems in the region.

Yang said that the Western states have subjected China to different forms of heavy economic and political pressures, but they have met China's resistance which has meant that their pressure did not work.

Yang, a member of China-Japan Commission for Friendship in the 21th Century, has headed a delegation to Tehran.

Head of Judiciary Meets Yemeni Justice Minister

LD2101172295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a meeting today with the justice minister of the Arab Yemen Republic, head of the judiciary Mohammad Yazdi emphasized that in every state system judicial power has the greatest role in maintaining the security and tranquillity of the people and the ruling establishment.

He said: In the Islamic Republic of Iran and Yemen judicial regulations are based on original Islamic sources.

In turn the Yemeni justice minister emphasized the progress of the judicial system in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and said Islam's capacity to meet world problems is one of the strengths of the judicial system in Islamic countries.

Semnan Telecommunications Center Inaugurated

LD2201111795 Tehran IRNA in English 1008 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Semnan, Jan. 22, IRNA—Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri here Sunday [22 January] inaugurated a telecommunication center in the provincial capital city of Semnan, in central Iran. The center will directly connect the province to other provinces and cities in the country.

Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telephone Mohammad Gharazi, Governor-General of Semnan Province Hamid Taha'i and a number of provincial officials were present at the inaugural ceremony.

The speaker met on Saturday night with Friday prayer leaders and clerics of the province and discussed with them economic and cultural problems of the province. Outlining the economic situation of the country, Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri reiterated that the officials were fully aware of even minor problems facing the people.

On the second day of his trip to Semnan province, the speaker arrived in Shahrud where he was warmly welcomed by a large crowd of local people and officials. Upon his arrival, Nateq-Nuri went to the city's cemetery and paid tribute to the martyrs.

During his three-day visit to the province, Majles speaker is due to travel to Damghan and Garmsar as well.

Cable TV Pilot Program To Be Implemented

LD2101191995 Tehran IRNA in English 1821 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 21, IRNA—A pilot project is to be implemented soon at a township here to expand cablevision network nationwide, Deputy Head of Visual Media Institute Hoseyn Jamali said here Saturday [21 January].

Jamali said programmes would be broadcast by his institute on the cablevision for four consecutive hours in the afternoon (12:30 to 16:30).

He added that his institute is also to set up video film production plant to meet the country's demand for video cassettes.

Jamali hoped number of films existing in the country's video network would reach up to 212 in the ten-day dawn from present 200 films.

He said that rls. [rials] 4,000 billion in credits had been offered by his institute to video film producers, of which rls. 2,000 million had been allocated to those active in Tehran, while the remaining portion had been allocated to those in other Iranian provinces.

Cooperation With Georgian Radio, TV Planned

LD2101120695 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Archil Gogelia, head of Georgia's state-run radio and television, met today with Mr. 'Ali Larijani, head of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He presented a report on radio and television activities in his country and expressed the hope that cultural cooperation between the two countries would expand further, particularly in the field of radio and television. He also explained Georgian radio and television's technical capability and mentioned areas in which joint cooperation can be carried out between the two organizations.

Mr. Larijani referred to the common historical and cultural bonds between Iran and Georgia and stressed the need for further cultural cooperation between the two countries. He announced the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to cooperate with Georgian radio and television, particularly in the production of television serials and technical areas.

Former Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan Dies

LD2001154595 Tehran IRNA in English 1435 GMT 20 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan 20, IRNA—Former Iranian Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan died at a hospital in Bern, Switzerland, today of acute chronical heart disease.

The IRNA health and medicare correspondent here is trying to contact the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy in Bern for further details.

Following the triumph of the Islamic revolution in February 1979, Bazargan was appointed as prime minister of the interim government by the father of the Islamic revolution the late imam Khomeyni.

The IRNA reporter in a telephone contact with an Iranian Embassy staffer in Bern, Switzerland, was informed that Mehdi Bazargan had arrived in Zurich Friday morning by plane.

Iran's Supreme Medical Council had agreed on a request made by the Bazargan's family on sending him abroad for heart treatment.

The embassy official told IRNA that Bazargan suffered a heart stroke moments after landing at Zurich and was immediately rushed to hospital by helicopter. He added that the efforts of doctors proved futile and Bazargan died as a result.

Earlier reports indicated that Bazargan was transferred to Bern, but the Iranian official underlined that Bazargan had died at a hospital in Zurich itself.

Fuel, Oil By-Products Increase Noted

LD2201135095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In an exclusive interview with our correspondent, the managing-director of the Ports and Shipping Organization [Mohammad Madad] said that 15.2 million tonnes of goods were imported to the country within the past nine months.

He said: The level of imported goods through the country's ports were 11.4 million tonnes during the same period which shows an increase of one percent comparing to last year's figures.

He said: Exported goods were 3.8 million tonnes during the same time and showed an increase of 10 percent comparing to last year's figures.

He said: During the same time, also around 5.7 million tonnes of fuel and oil by-products have been imported to the country which show an 11 percent increase when compared to figures for the same period last year.

The managing-director of the Ports and Shipping Organization also said: The most important imported goods shipping to the country during the same period included: Wheat: 3.2 million tonnes, showing an increase of 67 percent; metals: 2 million tonnes, showing an increase of three percent; chemical fertilizers: 700,000 tonnes, showing an increase of 62 percent; sugar: 368,000 tonnes, showing an increase of 45 percent when compared to figures for the first nine months of last year.

He mentioned that the country's ports have been equipped with advanced loading and unloading facilities enabling a faster movement at ports. He added: The use of such facilities has reduced the transportation of goods by eight dollars per tonne.

Pakistan

Official Announces Incentives To Attract Investment

BK2101143195 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 21 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal government has announced an attractive package of incentives and concessions for establishment of 12 special industrial zones. Announcing the package at a news conference in Islamabad today, the secretary of Board of Investment, Syed Mohibullah Shah, said these incentives are expected to attract annually $2-3 billion investments from investors of South America, Europe, Far East, and the Gulf. The package offers a 10-year income tax relaxation. In case of nonavailability of machinery in Pakistan, its import will be free of duty. In case raw material to be used in these units is not available, a 25-percent rebate on the import of raw material will be allowed. When these industrial units go into operation, 25-percent rebate in the central excise duty will be allowed on their production. For establishment of pioneer industries not existing in Pakistan, additional incentives such as 10-year concessions on customs duty and eight-year concessions on sales and central excise duty will be given to help promote transfer of technology in the country.

The secretary of Board of Investment said the 12 special industrial zones to be promoted as industrial towns will be Dera Ghazi Khan, Rahimyar Khan, and Leiah in Punjab; Port Qasim near Karachi, Nawabshah and Larkana in Sindh; and Quetta and Zin Ghar in Balochistan. In the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province], one such zone will be established between Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu and another at Akora Khattak. In addition, one such zone will be established at Mirpur in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and at Gilgit in the northern areas. Syed Mohibullah Shah expressed the hope that the special industrial zones will start commercial production by 1999, resulting in accelerating industrial investment and general export, to ensure transfer of technology, and create additional employment opportunities in the country.

Editorial Claims U.S. 'Double-Crosses' Government

BK2201102295 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Jan 95 p 6

[Editorial: "America Double-Crosses Pakistan"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dependence on America for its defence needs has proved disastrous financially. In the past thirteen years Pakistan had signed a large number of agreements with the US government for the supply of various kinds of defence equipment including F-16, missiles and spare parts, for which Pakistan paid in advance a huge sum of 3.898 billion dollars, but in return received only 1.484 billion dollars worth of equipment. The US has stopped the dispatch of the remaining equipment. Now the US will not return the money nor allow the export of the equipment for which payment has been made. It will be recalled that all military hardware sold by US firms has to be cleared by the US government. Pakistan struck deals with American armament firms through the US government. Money was paid to the Pentagon by the Pakistan government and it was the duty of the US government to pay the manufacturers. The US government later banned the supply to Pakistan of some items of equipment because of the notorious Pressler Amendment.

The trade in military hardware is conducted under the strict supervision of the Pentagon and it is therefore the responsibility of the US government to refund the money paid by Pakistan for equipment which is now prohibited for Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment. The sad fact is that America now refuses to acknowledge the debt, alleging that the money was paid to a firm which no longer exists having gone into liquidation. This is a mere excuse and a most lame excuse it is. The Pentagon approved the sale of equipment and received payment for it and when the US government imposed the ban on the sale of this equipment it was the responsibility of the US government to recover the amount from the manufactures and refund the amount to Pakistan. The fact that the money was paid and is in America, it cannot be written off as a bad debt. [sentence as published] The US government was involved in this transaction at all stages and it cannot shrug off its responsibility in the way it has been doing.

If, however, the equipment paid for cannot be sent to Pakistan and the US government cannot refund the money it took from Pakistan then, at least the amount should be adjusted against Pakistan's debt to the US. If this is not done and if Washington continues to rip off huge sums from Third World countries it will become almost impossible for any poor country to do any kind of business with the US. In most matters Uncle Sam claims to be on high moral ground and speaks contemptuously of the morals of poor countries, but in fact it is the other way around. The perception of American business morality in the Third World is that the US is a fair weather trading partner.

The US has run into serious economic difficulties at home and it is trying desperately to solve its internal economic problems at the expense of poor Third World countries groaning under the burden of huge debts. Now America is claiming payment for what it calls its intellectual property by making poor countries pay for using the products of its research laboratories. The pharmaceuticals, and even for the genetically engineered seeds being used in poor countries the US is claiming royalties for US intellectual property. Like Shylock Uncle Sam is demanding his pound of flesh, from the emaciated body of its debtors. Nations that depend upon business for their well-being should at least learn to honour their business commitments, and be prepared to govern all their business dealings according to time honoured business morality. If Washington flouts the rules of business and depends upon brute force to loot the world it may find that one day the worm will turn and that no one will be prepared to do any kind of business with it.

Paper Ridicules India Being A 'World Power'

BK2001160295 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 20 Jan 95 p 4

[Editorial:"U.S. Certificate for India for Being Global Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Administration has granted India the status of a third major world power. In a news briefing during the visit of U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, the U.S. Defense Department said that in the post-Cold War era, the United States gives Russia, China, and India the status of global powers and wants to maintain better relations with them. The U.S. defense secretary' visit was part of the efforts to establish good ties with India. Meanwhile, the U.S. has said that the Kashmir issue is between Pakistan and India and that they themselves should resolve it. Neither has asked the U.S to play any role in its resolution.

The U.S. has not sought any indirect means to provide the F-16 aircraft to Pakistan. It has been made clear to the Pakistani authorities that the question of violating the Pressler Amendment does not arise at all. With U.S. assistance, India wants to work in defense technology. India has obtained a certificate from the U.S. for being the third major world power, and whether India treats it as an award or not, the U.S. wanted to please India and has succeeded. The tradition of mutual commendation extends from individuals to nations and has been prevalent since ancient times. But, no one ignores one's interests at any one time. The U.S. has interest not only in this region, but the entire world, and as a superpower, this is its responsibility and obligation. However, it turned heaven and earth around to praise India, and now India remains exalted in accolades. No one had anything to do with this.

As far as the merits of Pakistan-U.S. and Pakistan-India relations are concerned, they are obvious to everyone. The U.S. is an old ally of Pakistan, and there have been periods of cordiality and coldness in ties. India is Pakistan's close neighbor. Had the Kashmir problem not arisen, friendly and good neighborly ties would have been established and there would not have been any differences between them. Unfortunately, India's illegal occupation of Kashmir, its refusal to implement the UN resolutions to resolve the issue, and mutual tension have caused them to fight three wars. They are opposed to each other. The U.S. has described India as the third major global power on the basis of its size, population, and resources. Otherwise, as far as other qualities of greatness are concerned, India, to a great extent, lacks them. It cannot even prove that it is anywhere close to upholding the principle of good neighborliness. In spite of agreeing to adhere to the principles of peaceful coexistence among nations, it did not implement them sincerely. There is not even one small neighbor who is satisfied with India's attitude. Its tendency to remain a hegemonic power has always kept its neighbors uneasy and perturbed. If the U.S. gives more importance to India than to Russia and China and declares it the second major global power after the U.S. itself, that will not have a positive effect on the regional situation. India is already arrogant. But, its disposition has not given anyone the impression it is great. If it is prepared to resolve the Kashmir issue by granting the right of a free plebiscite to the Kashmiri people, if it begins treating small neighbors according to the principles of peaceful coexistence, and desists from interfering in their internal affairs, it may receive real honor. One cannot become great by blowing one's own trumpet or by the mere saying so of someone else. Even small people can become great on the basis of their education, artistic skills, good character, and love of principles. And, the world has witnessed the outcome of the deviation from principles through the fragmentation of the Soviet Union.

Editorial: Latest Obstacles to Talks With India

BK2201095695 Islamabad THE NATION in English 22 Jan 95 p 6

[Editorial: "New Indian Initiative"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Indian Foreign Secretary Mr Srinavasan talking to newsmen in New Delhi, has made a tentative attempt at defreezing the diplomatic ice that has set in between the two countries after Pakistan got OIC's [ICO] support at the international level and shut down India's Karachi Consulate at the bilateral level. The thrust of his attempt being that India was serious in re-opening meaningful talks with Pakistan and Pakistan's scepticism about the Indian offer was unfounded. For the record, he said that India had not ruled out any option for the resolution of the Kashmir problem and was willing to discuss the possibility of even a plebiscite. He felt, however, that resistance to resumption of bilateral negotiations comes from Pakistan, not India, because it is Pakistan which has imposed preconditions for talks. India favours talks without any conditions. Eminently reasonable as the Indian Foreign Secretary's position looks, it suffers from a serious flaw. One aspect of which is that it flies in the face of positions taken by both the Indian Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao and other Cabinet Ministers. All of them in their recent pronouncements have repeatedly asserted that Kashmir being an integral part of India, its future is not negotiable. India had thereby diluted its earlier position, during the Secretary-level meetings, that Kashmir was a disputed territory. That, incidentally, was not a concession on India's part but a reiteration of the Indian position as expressed in the Simla Agreement. Pakistan's position is that it cannot enter into a dialogue without knowing whether India considers the whole of Kashmir as disputed or only the territory held by Pakistan. In Pakistan's view, when even the very premises of an important negotiation is not clear, it would be futile to undertake the exercise. This is not a precondition but a clarification sought of a word that India itself has used. Another aspect of the same flaw is that in discussing Kashmir's future, whether India assumes it to be only a territorial dispute with Pakistan? And whether the people of Kashmir have a say in the matter or not? This again is not a precondition by Pakistan but only an elucidation sought of the words: Kashmir dispute. In other words, is India willing to discuss the future of Kashmir and its people as a whole?

Now speaking of Pakistan's preconditions: one, of the reduction in the strength of the occupation army in the Valley and two, of the suspension of the TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities Act] laws, Pakistan has to explain that the word 'precondition' used by Pakistan, may appear to India to be presumptuous, or 'predetermining' the trend of the negotiations, but in fact it is neither. The word may be unacceptable to India in its diplomatic connotation but all that Pakistan seeks is a demonstration of good faith on India's part. It is neither a precondition nor a dictation. It is an expression of concern by Pakistan at the large-scale violation of human rights in the backdrop of which the two sides are going to negotiate. What sort of a climate for talks India wants to provide with its forces running berserk, killing scores every day, as they do? Would it not then be India predetermining the outcome of the talks by driving a horrified Pakistan away from the negotiating table?

Defense Minister Explains Policy on Gwadar

BK2301034195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 23 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani in a policy statement at the National Assembly, said Gwadar is an integral part of Pakistan and the question of selling or leasing any part of the country, including Gwadar, to any foreign hand does not arise at all.

He said the government wants to develop Gwadar as an international port and due to Pakistan's control over vital trade routes, it wants to play an effective role in international relations and global policies. He said Gwadar is the shortest sea route to the Central Asian states, without which the Central Asian trade will be transferred to Europe and other places.

The defense minister also said that those speading false propaganda on Gwadar are in fact trying to prevent foreign investment. He said these elements are harming Pakistan's long-term interests by preventing it from becoming a trade route to Central Asian states. He said they all know that India does not want Pakistan to become an important trade route with Central Asia, because it will dramatically enhance Pakistan's importance. With the construction of a port in Gwadar, Pakistan will be able to foil any attempt to lay siege, in case of war, in the Indian ocean. The defense minister said the government will welcome foreign investment in Gwadar and will also appreciate investments from the United States, European countries, and Japan as well as from Muslim countries for the progress of Pakistan. He said foreign investment does not mean that the country or any part of it or its interests have been compromised. Rather, it reflects the confidence and trust of investors in the future and stability of the country. He said the prime minister, in a spirit of goodwill, has considered giving a piece of land near Gwadar to a Gulf authority to enable them build a residence there. However, Gwadar will formally remain a part of Pakistan.

Later, Speaker Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani described the motion as subjudice.

Earlier, explaining the significance of Gwadar for Pakistan's stability, several opposition members called for the protection of the country's territorial frontiers. They made a demand to refer the issue to a committee. The members who expressed their views include deputy leader of the opposition, Gauhar Ayub; Prince Salahuddin Syed; Raja Nadir Pazeer; Shahid Khakan Abbasi; Mian Amjad Yasin; Khwaja Ahmad Asif; Mian Abdul Waheed; Maulana Abdur Rahman Chitrali; Mian Mohammad Munir; Maulana Shaheed Ahmad; and Muzaffar Ahmad Hashmi. Professor N.D. Khan, Federal Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs, moved several ordinances in the house, after which it was adjourned to meet this afternoon.

High-Level Meeting Held on Sectarianism

BK2201134295 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 22 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Islamabad today, a high-level meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to review the law and order situation in the country. The meeting took stock of the rising sectarianism and ethnic militancy in the country and decided to curb it firmly. With a view to checking the foreign hand in sectarian clashes in the country promoted by some sectarian organizations, it was decided that no madrassa [Islamic religious school] and institution in the country will be allowed to receive donations from foreign countries directly, but such donations will be routed through official channels only. The deputy commissioners throughout the country will collect information about madrassas and religious institutions which have enrolled foreign students and their documents will be scrutinized. Private training camps imparting military training set up by some sectarian organizations in the country will also be banned.

The provincial chief ministers were directed to give their recommendations within two weeks on the measures to be adopted by them for checking the menace of sectarianism. The Council of Islamic Ideology was asked to give its recommendations on the standardization of the curriculum of deeni [religious] madrassas so that these institutions were not used by vested interests for promoting sectarianism. The meeting was attended by provincial governors; chief ministers; federal ministers for interior, Kashmir and northern areas, law, justice and parliamentary affairs; the president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir; and the attorney general of Pakistan besides senior federal and provincial officials. Details are still coming in.

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